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"A HUGE BLACK CAME OUT FROM THE BURNING WALL, BEARING IN HIS ARMS A YOUNG WOMAN."

BUG-JARGAL,

THE

LAST DAY OF A CONDEMNED MAN,

AND

CLAUDE GUEUX

BY

VICTOR HUGO

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

ARABELLA WARD

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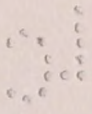

C. J. PETERS & SON, TYPOGRAPHERS,
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PREFACE TO EDITION OF 1832.

In 1818, the author of this volume was sixteen years old; he had made a wager that he could write a book in fifteen days. The result was *Bug-Jargal*. At sixteen, one bets on everything and improvises on everything. The story was written two years before *Hans of Iceland*, and although seven years later, in 1825, the author revised and rewrote a great part of it, yet as a whole it is the same, and may be called the author's first work. He apologizes for its many unimportant details; but he thought that the small number of those who like to classify the works of a poet, however obscure he may be, in the order of their composition and publication, would not be averse to his giving the date of *Bug-Jargal*.

As for the author himself, like a traveller who looks back on his journey to try and find in the hazy lines of the horizon the spot from whence he set out, he wanted to make this story a souvenir of that age of calmness, audacity, and confidence, when he boldly attacked so immense a subject as the revolt of the blacks of San Domingo in 1791, a giant struggle in which three continents took part, Europe and Africa as the contestants, and America as the battlefield

March 24, 1832.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

January, 1826.

The following story, founded on the revolt of the slaves of San Domingo in 1791, was in itself a sufficient reason for hindering the author from publishing it. But a limited number of copies had already been printed and circulated in 1820, at a time when the politics of the day were only partially interested in Hayti, and it is evident that it is not the author's fault if the subject, since then, has become of greater interest. The events arranged themselves for the book, not the book for the events. However this may be, the author had no idea of raising the volume from the obscurity into which it had fallen; but he was informed that a Parisian publisher was thinking of reprinting his anonymous sketch, and in order to prevent this, he revised it and brought it out himself. This precaution saved the author's *amour propre*, and the aforesaid publisher a poor investment.

Several distinguished persons, both colonists and officers, who were implicated in the troubles of San Domingo, having heard of the forthcoming publication, voluntarily gave the author much useful material, which was all the more valuable as most of it had never been published. The author here wishes to express to them his sincere thanks. The documents have been most serviceable to him in rectifying some mistakes in the local coloring of Captain d'Auverney's story, as well as in its historical accuracy.

It must also be stated that the story of *Bug-Jargal* is only a fragment of a more extensive work, which the author had

planned to write, to be known as *Camp Stories*. The author imagines that during the war of the Revolution, several French officers meet together to while away the long nights of bivouac by telling their adventures. The present volume is a part of this series, but can be read as a separate story. The series was never completed, and never will be, nor is it of importance that it should be.

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BUG-JARGAL.

CHAPTER I.

When it came Captain Léopold d'Auverney's turn to speak, he opened his eyes wide, declaring that really there was not a single episode in his life worth relating.

"But, Captain," said Lieutenant Henri, "they say you have travelled around the world. Have you not been to the Antilles, Africa, Italy and Spain? Ah, Captain, your lame dog!"

D'Auverney started, dropped his cigar, and turned hastily to the door of the tent, as an enormous dog came limping toward him.

The dog, as he rushed in, crushed the captain's cigar beneath his paw, but the captain did not notice it.

The animal licked his master's feet, wagged his tail, yelped, jumped about as well as he could, and finally crouched down in front of him. The captain seemed moved, troubled, and patted him mechanically with his left hand, loosening with the other the chin-piece of his helmet, while from time to time he repeated the words, "You, Rask! you! There,— but who brought you back?"

"By your leave, Captain"—

A moment before, Sergeant Thadée had raised the flap of the tent, and now stood with his right arm hidden under his cloak, his eyes filled with tears, as he silently watched the climax of the *Odyssey*. At length he ventured the words, "By your leave, Captain"— D'Auverney raised his eyes.

"Ah, here you are, Thad; but how the devil did you man-

age it? Poor dog! I thought he was in the English camp. Where did you find him?"

"Thank Heaven! Captain, I am as delighted as your nephew used to be when you made him decline *cornu*, the horn; *cornus*, of the horn."

"Tell me, where did you find the dog?"

"I did not find him, Captain; I have been looking for him."

The captain rose and held out his hand to the sergeant; but the latter still kept his own hidden in his cloak. The captain did not notice the fact.

"You see, Captain, ever since poor Rask was lost, I have noticed, sir, by your leave, that you missed something. To tell you the whole story, I thought, when evening came, and he failed to return to share my supper as usual, that it would take very little to make old Thad cry like a child. But no, thank God, I have cried only twice in my life: the first was when — when" —

The sergeant looked at his chief anxiously.

"The second was when the idea entered the head of that fellow Balthazar, corporal in the seventh demi-brigade, to make me clean a bunch of onions."

"It strikes me, Thadée," cried Henri laughing, "that you have not yet told us on what occasion you cried the first time."

"Probably, old fellow, it was when you received the embrace of La Tour d'Auvergne, first grenadier of France; was it not?" asked the captain kindly, continuing to stroke the dog.

"No, Captain; if Sergeant Thadée ever cried, you know that it could only have been, and you will bear me witness, on the day when he gave the word, '*fire*,' upon Bug-Jargal, otherwise called Pierrot."

A shadow crossed d'Auverney's face, and hastily approaching the sergeant, he tried to seize him by the hand; but in spite of this unusual honor, old Thadée held his cloak closely about him.

"Yes, Captain," he continued, retreating a few steps while

d'Auverney kept his troubled eyes upon him, "yes, I did cry then; and he deserved it! He was black, it is true, but gunpowder is black too, and — and "—

The worthy sergeant would have liked to carry out his strange comparison properly. Perhaps there was something pleasing to him in the idea; but it was in vain that he tried to express it; so, after having several times attacked it, so to speak, on every side, like a general who tries to attack a garrisoned fort, and fails, he hastily raised the siege, and went on without regard to the smiles of his listeners.

"You remember, Captain, do you not, the poor negro, rushing up out of breath just as his ten comrades stood there? They had already been bound. I was in command. And then he untied them himself, and took their place, although they did not want him to do so. But he was inflexible. Oh, what a man! He was a veritable Gibraltar. And then, Captain, as he stood there as straight as though he were about to dance, and his dog, this same Rask, who understood what was going on, and who sprang at my throat" —

"Usually, Thad," interrupted the captain, "when you reach this point in the story, you give a little caress to Rask; see how he is watching you."

"You are right," said Thadée, somewhat embarrassed, "he is watching me, poor Rask; but — old Malagrida used to say that a caress with the left hand brought ill-luck."

"Well, why not use your right hand," asked d'Auverney surprised, for the first time noticing Thadée's hand hidden under the cloak, and the pallor of his face.

The sergeant's embarrassment seemed to increase.

"By your leave, Captain, it is because — You have a lame dog already, and I am afraid you are about to have a one-armed sergeant."

The captain sprang from his seat.

"What? What do you mean? What are you saying, dear old Thadée, one-armed? Show me your arm. One-armed, great God!"

D'Auverney trembled from head to foot; the sergeant slowly opened his cloak, and showed his arm, wrapped in a bloody handkerchief.

"Ah, my God!" murmured the captain, carefully raising the linen. "Tell me about it, old fellow."

"Oh, it is a very simple story. I told you that I had noticed your grief ever since those cursed English stole your beautiful dog, poor Rask, the mastiff of Bug — That was enough. I resolved to bring him back (were it to cost me my life), in order to have a good appetite for supper this evening. So I gave orders to Mathelet to brush your uniform thoroughly, to-morrow being the day for the battle, and slipped quietly out of camp, armed with my sword. In order to reach the English camp more quickly, I crossed through the hedges, and had scarcely reached the first intrenchments, when, by your leave, Captain, in a clump of trees on the left, I caught sight of a group of redcoats. All unobserved I advanced to see what was going on, and there in their midst was Rask, tied to a tree, while two of my fine gentlemen, naked to the waist, like heathens, were fighting each other, making as much noise as the drum of a regiment. These two Englishmen, if you please, Captain, were fighting for your dog. But all at once Rask caught sight of me, and gave such a bound that the cord broke, and in the twinkling of an eye he was at my heels. The others were not long in following. I hid in the woods. Rask followed. Several bullets whizzed by my ears. Rask barked, but luckily they could not hear him above their shouts of '*French dog! French dog!*' as though your dog was not a fine San Domingo. Well, I crossed through the thicket, and was just leaving it when two redcoats appeared before me. I disposed of one with my sword, and should have made way with the other had not his pistol been loaded. You see my right arm — Well, no matter! The '*French dog*' sprang at his throat, as though he were an old acquaintance, and the Englishman fell over, strangled to death. I promise you the embrace was a rough one. Why did the fel-

low pursue me, like a beggar after a student? But, Thad is back in camp again, and Rask too. My only regret is that the good Lord was not willing for me to receive this wound in to-morrow's battle, that's all."

The old sergeant's features became sad at the thought of not having received the wound in battle.

"Thadée!" cried the captain, in a vexed tone. Then more gently; "Why were you foolish enough to run such a risk for a dog?"

"It was not for a dog, Captain, it was for Rask."

D'Auverney's face relaxed completely. The sergeant continued: —

"For Rask, the mastiff of Bug"—

"Enough! enough! old Thad," cried the captain, putting his hand to his eyes. "Come," said he, after a moment's silence, "lean on me, and we will go to the hospital."

Thadée obeyed, after a respectful resistance. The dog, who had been chewing his master's fine bear-skin rug, rose and followed them.

CHAPTER II.

This episode had greatly roused the curiosity of the careless story-tellers.

Captain Léopold d'Auverney was one of those men who, no matter where they are placed by the chances of nature or circumstance, always inspire a certain degree of respect and interest. At first sight, there was nothing especially prepossessing in him; his manner was cold, his glance indifferent. Although tropical suns had bronzed his features, they had not roused in him that vivacity of gesture and expression which the Creoles unite with a graceful carelessness. D'Auverney spoke little, rarely listened, and always appeared restless. The first to mount, the last in camp, it seemed as though he were trying to forget himself in bodily exercise. His thoughts had left their sad traces in the deep lines of his brow, and were not such as are forgotten in the telling, nor such as would interest one in a light conversation. Léopold d'Auverney, whom the fatigues of battle could not overcome, seemed to be borne down by a mental struggle, so to speak. He avoided discussion as much as he sought fighting. If now and then he let himself be drawn into an argument, he uttered three or four words full of sound sense and judgment, then, just as his adversary was about to be convinced, he stopped short, saying, "*Of what use is it all?*" and left the camp to ask the commander what could be done, while waiting for the charge or the attack.

His comrades excused his cold and reserved manner, because on every occasion they had found him brave, good and kind. He had saved many a life, at the risk of his own, and they well knew that, although he seldom opened his lips, his purse, at least, was never closed. The army loved him and forgave him his faults, even to the point of worshipping him.

Yet he was still very young. He looked perhaps thirty, but he was not even that. Although he had been fighting for quite a while in the Republican ranks, they were still ignorant of his past life. The only being who, besides Rask, could elicit any show of affection from him was the old sergeant, Thadée, who had entered the army with him, and who now and then told, in a vague way, some stories of his life. It was known that d'Auverney had suffered great misfortunes in America; that he had married at San Domingo, and lost his wife and his entire family in the massacres which the Revolution brought upon that magnificent colony. At the time of this story, such misfortunes were so common, that there existed a sort of fund of general sympathy, in which every one had a share. So they pitied Captain d'Auverney, not so much for the loss he had suffered, as for the way in which he bore it. Now and again there were visible, behind his cold indifference, signs of a deep, unhealed wound.

However, as soon as a battle began, his brow became serene. He was as dauntless in an assault as though he were ambitious for a generalship, but after the victory he appeared as modest as though he wanted to be only a simple soldier. His comrades, when they saw his contempt for honors and promotion, could not see why he should appear so eager before a battle, nor did they surmise that d'Auverney sought only death from all the chances of war.

The representatives of the people gave him the title of brigade-commander, one day on the battlefield; but he declined it, because he would be obliged, in leaving his company, to part from Sergeant Thadée. A few days later, he offered to undertake a hazardous expedition. He returned from it safe, contrary to the general expectation and his own wishes. He was heard to say that he wished he had not refused the promotion offered him; "For," he added, "although I always escape the enemy's guns, perhaps the guillotine, which ends those who rise, might claim me."

CHAPTER III.

This was the man about whom the following conversation took place, when he had left the tent.

"I'll wager," cried Lieutenant Henri, wiping off the mud which the dog had left on his red boot, "I'll wager that the captain would not exchange the broken paw of his dog for those ten hampers of Madeira which we saw the other day in the general's wagon."

"Hush, hush!" gayly cried Paschal, the aide-de-camp. "That would be a bad bargain. The hampers are at present empty, I have heard about them; and," he added, in a serious tone, "thirty uncorked bottles are not worth as much, you must admit, Lieutenant, as that poor dog's paw, which, after all, could be used for a bell-pull."

The company burst into laughter at the serious tone in which the aide-de-camp uttered these last words. Alfred, alone, the young officer of the Basque Hussars, did not even smile, but looked on discontentedly.

"I do not see, gentlemen, what cause there is for laughter in what has just happened. The dog and the sergeant, both of whom have been with d'Auverney as long as I have known him, seem to me to be most interesting. Besides, the episode" —

Paschal, piqued at Alfred's ill-humor and at the others' jokes, interrupted him with —

"Yes, it was very affecting, a restored dog, and a broken arm!"

"Captain Paschal, you are wrong," said Henri, flinging the bottle he had just emptied out of the tent, "this Bug, or Pierrot, rouses my curiosity."

Paschal, ready to retort angrily, became calm, and re-

marked that the glass which he had thought empty was full. D'Auverney entered at that moment, and sat down without a word. His manner was troubled, but his features were calmer. He seemed so preoccupied, that he heard nothing of the conversation about him. Rask had followed him, and crouched down at his feet with a restless air.

"Your glass, Captain d'Auverney. Taste a bit of this."

"Oh! Thank God," said the captain, "the wound is not dangerous, the arm is not broken."

Only the involuntary respect which they all felt for the captain, restrained the laugh on Henri's lips.

"Well, since you are no longer anxious about Thadée," said he, "and as we are here for the purpose of relating stories to shorten this night of bivouac, I hope, my dear friend, that you will keep your promise, and tell us the story of your lame dog and Bug — somebody, or Pierrot, that veritable Gibraltar!"

To this question, asked in a tone half-serious, half-joking, d'Auverney would have had nothing to reply, had not the others added their entreaties to those of the lieutenant.

At length he yielded.

"I will tell it to you, gentlemen; but you must expect only a very ordinary story, in which I play only a secondary *rôle*. If you expect something extraordinary on account of the attachment between Thadée, Rask and myself, I warn you that you deceive yourselves. I will begin."

Immediately silence fell upon the group. Paschal emptied his brandy-flask, and Henri wrapped himself in the half-demolished bear-skin, to protect himself from the night air, and Alfred stopped humming the Galician tune of *Mataperros*.

D'Auverney was silent a moment, as though to recall events of long ago; at last he began to speak very slowly, in a low tone, and with frequent pauses.

CHAPTER IV.

"Although born in France, when still very young I was sent to San Domingo, to an uncle, a rich colonist, whose daughter I was to marry.

"My uncle's estates lay next to Fort Galifet, and his plantations occupied the greater part of the plains of l'Acul.

"This unfortunate fact, which no doubt seems trifling to you, was one of the chief causes of the misfortunes and the total ruin of my family.

"Eight hundred negroes were employed on my uncle's immense estate. The wretched condition of these slaves was aggravated still more by their master's indifference. My uncle belonged to that class of planters, fortunately few in number, whose heart had been hardened by his long habit of absolute despotism. Accustomed to immediate obedience, the slightest hesitation on the part of a slave was punished in the most cruel manner, and often the intercession of his children served only to increase his anger. Thus we were often compelled to alleviate in secret the pain we could not prevent openly."

"Those are fine phrases!" said Henry aside, to his neighbor. "I trust that the captain will not leave the misfortunes of the former without some little dissertation on the duties imposed by humanity, *et cetera*. One might as well be at the Massiac club."[1]

[1] Perhaps our readers have forgotten that the Massiac club, to which Lieutenant Henri refers, was an association of *Negrophiles*. The club was organized at Paris, in the beginning of the Revolution, and was the cause of most of the insurrections which arose among the colonies.

One may be surprised at the rather audacious flippancy in which the young lieutenant referred to the *philanthropists* who reigned at this time through the mercy of the executioner. But we must remember that, both during the Reign of Terror and afterwards, liberty of thought and speech had taken refuge in the camp. This noble privilege now and then cost a general his

"I will be obliged to you, Henri, if you will spare me your jests," said d'Auverney coldly, who overheard the remark.

Then he resumed: —

"Among all these slaves, one alone found favor with my uncle. This was a Spanish dwarf, a colored *griffe*,[1] who had been given him by Lord Effingham, governor of Jamaica. My uncle had lived for a long time in Brazil, and had acquired habits of Portuguese luxury, liking to surround himself with a display corresponding to his wealth. His many slaves, trained to service like European servants, gave his home a princely splendor. That it might lack nothing, he had made Lord Effingham's slave his *fool*, after the manner of the ancient feudal princes, who had court jesters. It must be admitted that this choice was a remarkably happy one. The griffe, Habibrah (such was his name), was one of those creatures whose physical appearance was so strange, that if they did not amuse one, they would seem like monsters. The hideous dwarf was short and fat, and moved with singular

head; but it absolved from all reproach the shining glory of the soldiers whom the denunciators of the convention called, "the *gentlemen* of the Army of the Rhine."

[1] This word demands an explanation.

Monsieur Moreau de Saint Méry, in developing Franklin's system, has classified under the generic heads the various tints of the mixed colored race.

He says that man consists of one hundred and twenty-eight parts, the whites with whites, and the blacks with blacks.

Following out this idea, he states that one comes nearer to, or farther from one color or another, as one comes nearer to, or farther from, the sixty-fourth term, which is the mean proportion.

According to this system every man who is not eight parts white is called black.

Going from this color toward the white, there are nine principal stems, which vary according to the greater or less number of parts they retain of one color or the other. These nine stems are: the *sacatra*, *griffe*, *marabout*, *mulatto*, *quateron*, *metis*, *mameloue*, *quateronné*, *sang-mêle*.

The latter, continuing to mingle with the white, finally is confounded with it. It is proved, however, that some indisputable trace of its origin can be found on some part of the body.

The *griffe* is the result of five combinations, and may have from twenty-eight to thirty-two white parts, and ninety-six or one hundred and four of black.

rapidity on his slim, weak legs, which he folded under him when he sat down, like the legs of a spider. His huge head, sunk deep between his shoulders, bristled with frizzled, red wool, and his ears were so large that his comrades used to say that Habibrah used them to wipe his eyes with when he cried. His face was one constant grin, yet never the same, a strange mobility of feature which at least possessed the advantage of giving variety to his ugliness. My uncle loved him on account of his deformity and his constant gayety. Habibrah was his favorite. While the other slaves were worn out with work, Habibrah's only duty was to carry behind his master a large fan of birds-of-paradise plumes, and wave away the flies and mosquitos. My uncle had him eat on a rush mat at his feet, and always gave him something from his own choice dish. Habibrah appeared grateful for such kindness, and used his privileges of clown, the right to say and do anything, only to divert his master. At the least sign from the latter, he would run with the swiftness of an ape and the submission of a dog.

"I did not like the fellow. He was too servile; and if slavery does not dishonor one, being a servant lowers one. I felt a kindly pity for the unhappy negroes who worked all day with hardly any clothing to hide their chains; but this deformed buffoon, this lazy slave, in his absurd costume covered with gold lace and bells, filled me with scorn. Besides, the dwarf did not make good use of the advantage which being his master's favorite gave him. He never asked mercy for others, of the master who inflicted so much punishment; and one day, when he thought he was alone with my uncle, he was even heard to beg him to use greater severity than usual toward his unfortunate comrades. But the other slaves, who might have looked at him in jealousy and defiance, did not seem to hate him. He inspired them with a sort of respectful fear, unlike the feeling of hatred; and whenever he passed by their huts, in his great pointed cap covered with bells and its strange figures in red ink, they whispered among themselves: "*He is an obi!*" (*Sorcerer.*)

"These details which I am telling you, gentlemen, at first were of small note to me. I was completely absorbed by my pure love, which it seemed nothing could ever change, a love that had been felt and shared from childhood by the woman I was to marry. I thought of little else besides Marie. From my earliest years I had been accustomed to look upon her, who had been a sister to me, as my future wife; and there had grown up between us a feeling, the nature of which cannot be understood, even when I say that it partook of brotherly affection, passionate love, and perfect trust. Few men had a happier childhood than mine; few men have felt their hopes in life opening under a clearer sky, or brightened by a sweeter joy. Surrounded from birth with every luxury of wealth, with every privilege of rank, in a country where color alone gave rank, spending my days beside the one who possessed all my love, seeing that love smiled upon by our parents, who were the only ones who could have forbidden it, and all this at an age when the blood is warm, in a land where summer is eternal, and where nature is at her best, — what more was necessary to make me trust blindly in my future star? What more was needed to give me the right to say that few men have spent a happier childhood?"

The captain paused, as though his voice failed him when he recalled his past happiness. Then he continued, in a sorrowful tone: —

"It is true, that I have the right now to add that no one could spend his last days more unhappily."

And, as though the thought of his unhappiness gave him strength, he resumed in a firm voice: —

CHAPTER V.

"In the midst of these dreams and hopes, my twentieth birthday, which would be in the month of August, 1791, drew near. My uncle had set this date for my marriage with Marie. You can readily see that the thought of such approaching happiness easily put everything else out of my mind, and how vague would be my remembrance of the political troubles which for two years had been agitating the colony. I will not speak of the Count de Peinier, nor of Monsieur de Blanchelaude nor of that unhappy Colonel de Mauduit whose end was so tragic. I will not describe to you the rivalry of the *Provincial Assembly* of the North, and of the *Colonial Assembly*, which assumed the title of *General Assembly*, thinking that the word *colonial* sounded servile. These troubles, which at that time engrossed every one, interest us now only on account of the disasters which they produced. Between the mutual jealousy of the Cape and that of Port-au-Prince, my opinion, had I had one, would necessarily have been in favor of the Cape, where we were living, and of the *Provincial Assembly*, of which my uncle was a member.

"Only once was I called upon to take an active part in a debate on the subject of the day. It was at the time of that unfortunate decree of the 15th of May, 1791, by which the National Assembly of France granted the same political rights to the free colored men as to the whites. At an official ball, at the Cape, several young colonists spoke warmly of the law, which hurt the pride of the whites. Before I entered into the conversation I noticed a rich planter approaching the group. The whites were loath to admit him into their society, on account of his color, which made them suspect his origin. I went up to the man quickly, and said to

him, 'Do not stop here, sir; if you do, you will hear some disagreeable things, because you have mixed blood in your veins.' The remark irritated the man, and a duel followed. We were both wounded. I had been wrong, I confess, in provoking him; but probably the so-called *color prejudice* was not the only reason for my act; the man had had for some time sufficient audacity to aspire to my cousin's hand, and at the very moment when I had humiliated him so unexpectedly, he was about to dance with her.

"However, I was waiting impatiently for the moment when I could call Marie my own, and I remained ignorant of the growing excitement about me. Thinking only of my approaching happiness, I was not conscious of the portentous cloud overhanging our political horizon, and which, in bursting, was to ruin every one. It was not that the minds, even the most prompt to take alarm, seriously expected the revolt of the slaves; this class was despised too much to be feared. But there was among the whites and the free mulattoes alone, enough hatred, for the volcano, repressed for so long, to overthrow the entire colony at the dreaded moment when it burst forth.

"Early in the month of August, the month so earnestly longed for, a strange incident ruffled my peaceful hopes.

CHAPTER VI.

"On the banks of a pretty river which watered the plantation, my uncle had had erected a small rustic summer-house, surrounded by a thick hedge. Here Marie was in the habit of coming daily, in order to breathe the fresh sea-breezes, which, during the hottest months of the year, blew across San Domingo from morning till evening, their freshness increasing or diminishing with the heat.

"Every morning I decorated this bower with the most beautiful flowers that I could find.

"One day Marie came running to me in fright. She had, as usual, gone to her bower; and, to her surprise and terror, she found that all the flowers which I had placed there in the morning had been torn down and trampled under foot; a bunch of fresh marigolds was on the bench where she was accustomed to sit. Hardly had she recovered from her amazement, when she was attracted by the strains of a guitar, which came from among the surrounding vines; then a voice, not mine, began to sing a song which seemed to her Spanish, but, from fright and timidity perhaps, she caught only her own name, frequently repeated. Then she fled in haste, and fortunately she met no obstacle.

"This story filled me with rage and jealousy. My first thought was of the free *half-breed*, with whom I had recently had the dispute, but in my perplexity I resolved to do nothing rashly. I reassured poor Marie, and said to myself that I would keep constant watch over her, until the moment arrived when I could protect her still more closely.

"Supposing that the villain whose insolence had so startled Marie would not stop at this first attempt, in order to prove what I guessed to be his love I hid that very evening beneath

the chamber where my *fiancée* was sleeping. I waited, hidden among the sugar-cane, armed with my dagger. Nor did I wait in vain. Toward midnight, a sad, slow prelude fell upon the silence from a few feet away, and attracted my attention. The sound was like a blow to me; it was a guitar beneath Marie's very window! Furious, brandishing my dagger, I rushed toward the spot whence came the sounds, breaking under my tread the brittle stalks of sugar-cane. All of a sudden I felt myself seized and hurled down with a strength that seemed to me prodigious; my dagger was wrenched violently from me; I saw it gleaming above my head. At the same time two glowing eyes shone into mine, and a double row of white teeth, which I saw in the darkness, opened, to hiss out these words in a tone of fury: '*Te tengo! te tengo!*' (I have you! I have you!)

"More amazed than frightened, I struggled, but in vain, against my formidable adversary; and the point of steel had already entered my clothing, when Marie, awakened by the guitar and the noise of the scuffle, suddenly appeared at the window. She recognized my voice, saw the shining dagger, and uttered a cry of anguish. The despairing shriek in some way paralyzed the hand of my victorious antagonist; he stopped as though spell-bound, stepped back a few rods, the dagger still at my breast, then all at once he hurled it aside: 'No!' said he, this time in French, 'no! she would cry too much!' As he uttered these strange words, he disappeared among the rose-bushes; and by the time I arose, half-stunned, from the unequal and singular strife, not a sound, not a trace, of him remained.

"It would be difficult to describe my feelings when I regained consciousness, in the arms of my dear Marie, to whom I had been so strangely restored by the very one who seemed to dispute her possession with me. I was more than ever indignant at my sudden rival, and ashamed at owing my life to him.

"'In reality,' said my pride, 'it is to Marie I owe it, for it

was the sound of her voice alone that made him drop the dagger.' Yet I could not but admit that there was something generous in the feeling which had made my unknown rival spare me. But who was he? I was lost among suspicions, which conflicted one with another. It could not be the planter, the half-breed whom my jealousy had at first imagined. He was far from having that great strength; besides, it was not his voice. The man with whom I had fought seemed to be naked to his waist. Only the slaves in the colony were dressed in that way. But it could not be a slave; the feelings which had caused him to fling away the dagger could not be those of a slave; besides, everything in me rebelled at the idea of having a slave for a rival. Who was he, then? I decided to watch and wait."

CHAPTER VII.

"Marie had wakened the old nurse, who took the place of the mother she had lost in infancy. I passed the remainder of the night under their roof, and as soon as it was daylight we told my uncle the strange story. He seemed greatly surprised; but his pride, like mine, could not bring him to think that his daughter's unknown lover could be a slave. The nurse was given orders not to leave Marie alone, and I was to accompany her on all her walks, from that time until our wedding-day, which was set for the 22d of August. My uncle had but little leisure, owing to the convening of the Provincial Assembly, the anxiety which was felt in regard to the menacing state of affairs, and the work on the plantations. At the same time, supposing that the late aspirant could only come from without, the estate was ordered to be more severely guarded than ever.

"These precautions taken, I decided to try an experiment. I went to the summer-house, repaired the disorder of the day before, and trimmed it again with flowers, as I had been in the habit of doing for Marie.

"When it was time for her to go there, I took my loaded carbine, and offered to accompany my cousin to her bower. The old nurse followed us.

"I had not told Marie that I had removed all trace of the disorder from the summer-house, and stepping in first, she cried:

"'Why, look, Léopold, my bower is still in the same state that I left it yesterday. All your work is spoiled, the flowers are torn down and withered; what surprises me most,' she added, seeing a bunch of marigolds on the green bench, 'is that this horrid bouquet is still fresh. Look, dear, it seems as though it had just been picked.'

"I stood petrified, from astonishment and rage. My work of the morning was entirely destroyed; and the wretched flowers whose freshness surprised poor Marie had been insolently placed where I had left roses.

"'Calm yourself,' said Marie, seeing my agitation; 'it is a thing of the past; the fellow will not come here again; let us trample upon it, as I do on this odious bouquet.'

"I was careful not to undeceive her, fearing to frighten her; and without explaining that he whom she had said would probably 'not come again,' had already been there a second time, I let her indignantly stamp the marigolds under foot. I hoped that the hour had come when I might make the acquaintance of my mysterious rival, and I told Marie to sit down between her nurse and me.

"Hardly had I done so, when Marie put her hand on my lips; some sounds fell on our ears, softened by the wind and the noise of the stream. I listened. It was the same sad, slow music that had roused my rage on the previous evening. I was about to spring from my seat, when a sign from Marie restrained me.

"'Léopold,' she said in a low voice, 'keep calm. Perhaps he will sing, and from that we can probably discover who he is.'

"A moment later a strong yet plaintive voice came from the depths of the woods, mingling with the sweet notes of a guitar. It was a Spanish romance, and each word fell so distinctly upon my ear that even to-day I remember almost every one.

"'Why dost thou flee from me, Maria? Why, maid, dost thou flee from me? Why this fear, when thou hearest me? I am indeed to be feared, for I can love, and suffer, and sing!

"'When, among the slender cocoa-trees on the river-bank, I see thy form glide, pure and light, a mist comes before me, O Maria! I seem to see an angel!

"'And when I hear, O Maria, the enchanting tones which fall from thy lips, my heart trembles, and seems to mingle its plaintive voice with thine.

"'Alas! thy voice is sweeter to me than the notes of the birds which come from my native land.

"'From the land where I was king, from the land where I was free!

"'Free and a king, O maid! But for thee, I would renounce it all, kingdom, family, duty, revenge, ah, even revenge! And yet the moment is not far distant when I might gather the sweet and bitter fruit, which ripened so late!'

"The preceding verses were sung in a sad voice, and with occasional pauses; but during the last words, the voice had become fierce.

"'O Maria! thou art like a palm-tree, on its slender stalk, and thou canst see thyself in the eyes of thy youthful lover, like the palm-tree in the transparent water of a fountain.

"'But dost thou not know? At times in the desert, there rises a hurricane, jealous of the peace of the beloved fountain; it rises, and the wind and the sand unite under the sweep of its heavy wings; it winds about the tree and the source as a whirlpool of fire; and the fountain dries up, and beneath the deadly breath the green leaves of the palm-tree, which have the majesty of a crown and the grace of waving locks, shrivel and die.

"'Tremble, O fair daughter of Hispaniola![1] tremble, for soon about thee will be only a hurricane and a desert! Then thou wilt long for the love which would have led thee to me, as the joyous katha, bird of good omen, guides the traveller across the sands of Africa to the oasis.

"'Why dost thou repel my love, Maria? I am king, and my head rises above all others. Thou art white, I am black; but day must join with night, in order to bring forth the dawn and the twilight which are more beautiful than either.'"

[1] Our readers no doubt are aware that this was the name first given to San Domingo by Christopher Columbus when he discovered it in December, 1492.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A LONG sigh, drawn over the trembling cords of the guitar, accompanied the last words. I was beside myself. 'King! Black! Slave!'— a thousand confused thoughts, roused by the strange song I had just heard, surged through my brain. I was seized with a violent longing to make way with the unknown creature who thus dared to use the name of Marie in his songs of love and warning; I grasped my carbine tightly, and rushed from the arbor. Marie, frightened, held out her arms to detain me, but already I was in the thicket whence the voice had come. I searched every inch of brushwood, I thrust the barrel of my gun into every bush, I examined every tree, I peered behind every tall shrub. Nothing! nothing, still nothing! The useless search, and my unavailing reflection in the matter, added confusion to my anger. Would the insolent fellow always escape my weapon as he did my mind? I could neither guess who he was, nor could I see him! Just then the sound of bells brought me out of my reverie. I turned. The dwarf Habibrah stood beside me.

"'Good-morning, Master,' said he, bowing respectfully; but his suspicious glance, turned sidewise upon me, seemed to express malice and triumph at my anxiety.

"'Tell me!' I cried roughly, 'have you seen any one in this wood?'

"'Only you, Señor mio,' he calmly replied.

"'Did you not hear a voice?' I asked again.

"The slave waited a moment, as though wondering what to answer. I boiled with rage.

"'Come,' I cried, 'answer quickly, you wretch! Did you hear a voice anywhere?'

"He looked at me boldy with his two round eyes, which resembled those of a tiger-cat.

"'*Que quiere decir usted* (What do you mean?) by a voice, Master? There are voices everywhere, and for everything; there is the voice of the birds, there is the voice of the stream, there is the voice of the wind among the branches' —

"I shook him roughly.

"'Wretched clown! Cease making fun of me, or I will make you hear the voice of my carbine. Answer me in a word. Have you heard a man singing a Spanish song in these woods?'

"'Yes, Señor,' he answered calmly; 'and there were words in the song too — wait, Master, I'll tell you about it. I was strolling along the edge of the wood, listening to what the silver bells on my *gorra* (cap) were telling me. Suddenly the breeze brought to my ears some words of the language which you call Spanish, the language I lisped when my age was counted by months, not years, when I was tied to my mother's back by red and yellow bands. I love this language; it reminds me of the time when I was a little fellow, and not a dwarf, a child, and not a fool. I approached the spot where the voice came from, and I heard the final words of the song.'

"'Well, is that all?' I cried impatiently.

"'Yes, *hermoso* Master; but if you wish, I can tell you who the singer was.'

"I almost embraced the poor clown.

"'Oh, speak!' I cried, 'speak! here is my purse, Habibrah! And ten more purses shall be yours, if you will tell me who the man is.'

"He took the purse, opened it, and smiled.

"'*Diez bolsas* (ten purses) more than this! but, *demonio* (the devil)! that would make a full *fanega* (measure) of good crowns, with the stamp *del rey Luis quince* (of King Louis XV.), enough to sow the field of the magician Altornino, who understood the art of making *buenos doblones* grow; but do

not be angry, young master, I will come to the point. Do you remember, Señor, the last words of the song: "Thou art white, I am black; but day must join with night, in order to bring forth dawn and twilight, which are more beautiful than either." And if the song speaks true, the griffe Habibrah, your humble slave, born of a negress and a white man, is more beautiful than you, *Señorito de amor.* I am the child of day and night; I am the dawn or the twilight, of which the Spanish song tells; and you are only the day. So, I am more beautiful than you; *si usted quiere* (by your leave), more beautiful than a white man.'

"The dwarf murmured these strange words between great bursts of laughter. Again I interrupted him.

"'What does your raving amount to? Does all this tell me who was the singer of these woods?'

"'Exactly, Master,' replied the clown, with an evil glance. 'It is evident that *el hombre* (the man) who could sing such *madness*, as you call it, could be, and is, none other than a fool like me! I have won *las diez bolsas!*"

"I raised my hand to strike the freed slave for his insolent jesting, when suddenly a frightened cry rang out from the woods on the side of the arbor. It was the voice of Marie. I fled, on wings as it were, asking myself in terror what new trouble I had to fear. I reached the arbor, panting.

"A frightful sight awaited me.

"A monstrous crocodile, its body half hidden under the rose-bushes and the river-reeds, had thrust its huge head through one of the leafy arches which supported the roof of the arbor. Its hideous half-open jaws were about to seize a young colored fellow of huge stature, who was holding Marie with one arm, while with the other he was plunging the steel of a dagger into the sharp jaws of the monster. The crocodile was struggling furiously against the strong arm which held it at bay. As I appeared at the arbor, Marie gave a cry of joy, wrenched herself from the arms of the negro, and fell fainting into mine.

"'I am saved!' she cried.

"The negro turned, crossed his arms on his breast, and, looking sadly at the girl, stood motionless, without seeming to notice the crocodile near him, forgetting that he had dropped the dagger, and that the beast was about to devour him. Such would surely have happened, had I not placed Marie on the lap of the nurse, who still sat on the bench more dead than alive, and, rushing at the monster, shot the bullet from my carbine into his open jaws. The animal, overpowered, opened and closed its bloody mouth and shining eyes once or twice; but it was only a spasmodic movement, and suddenly, with a great thud, the beast fell over upon its back, stiffening out its huge scaly paws. It was dead.

"The negro whose life I had been fortunate enough to save, turned and watched the monster's final convulsions; then his eyes sought the ground, but, raising them slowly to Marie, who had returned to my arms, he said to me in a more than hopeless tone: —

"'*Porque le has matado?*' (Why did you kill him?)

"And without waiting for my reply, he strode away toward the woods and disappeared."

CHAPTER IX.

"This terrible scene, its strange end, the various emotions which had preceded and followed my vain search through the woods, threw my head into a whirl. Marie was still silent from fright; and a few moments elapsed before we could express our incoherent thoughts in any way except by looks, and pressing each other's hands. Finally I broke the silence.

"'Come, Marie, come away from this place! There is something fatal about it!'

"She rose hastily, as though only waiting for my permission; and leaning on my arm, we left.

"I asked her how it had happened that the black had appeared just at the moment of such terrible danger, and if she knew who he was; for the fellow's clothing, which only half concealed his body, showed that he belonged to the lowest class of the islanders.

"'The man,' said Marie, 'is probably one of my father's negroes, who was at work near the river just as the crocodile appeared which made me give the cry you heard. All I can tell you is, that in an instant he had sprung from the woods to help me.'

"'From which side did he come?' I asked.

"'From the side opposite the one where we heard the singing a while ago, and where you entered the wood.'

"This explanation upset the connection which my mind had been making between this negro who had spoken to me in Spanish just as he left, and my unknown rival who had sung the song in the same language. Other facts were at work in my mind. This negro, of a stature almost gigantic, of prodigious strength, might be the rough adversary against whom I had struggled the preceding night. The fact of his

being naked struck me forcibly. The singer of the woods had sung, 'I am black,' — another mark of similitude. He had declared himself king; this one was a slave; but I remembered, not without surprise, the look of rough majesty imprinted on his face, with the characteristic signs of the African race, — the shining eyes, the white teeth against the shining black skin, the wide forehead, especially surprising in a negro, the scornful curl which gave to his thick lips and nostrils a haughty and powerful look, the dignity of his bearing, the beauty of his form, which, although thin and worn from the fatigues of daily labor, still showed Herculean development. I recalled the imposing appearance of the slave, and said to myself that he was well fitted for a king. Then, remembering a crowd of other incidents, I groaned aloud at the negro's insolence; I wanted to find him, and punish him. . . . And then all my doubts returned. What, indeed, was the ground of my suspicions? The island of San Domingo was, to a great extent, owned by Spain; therefore many negroes, whether they had originally belonged to the colonists of San Domingo or had been born there, mingled the language of Spain with their own. And because this negro had addressed a few words of Spanish to me, was this a reason for supposing him to be the singer of that Spanish romance, which showed a degree of mental culture entirely unknown among the negroes? As to his strange reproach at my having killed the crocodile, it showed a distaste for the life which his position necessitated; and surely I need not resort to a theory of a hopeless love for the daughter of his master. His having been in the woods near the arbor was most fortunate; his strength and size were far from satisfying me as to his being my nocturnal antagonist. Were these the frail proofs on which I could accuse him before my uncle, and submit to the cruel vengeance of his pride a poor slave who had so bravely saved Marie?

"As these thoughts were fighting against my anger, Marie settled the question by this remark: —

"'Léopold, we ought to be very grateful to that brave negro; without him I should have been killed! You would have come too late.'

"These words decided me. They did not alter my determination to find the slave who had saved Marie, but they changed my reasons for finding him. I had intended punishment; now I would reward him.

"My uncle learned from me that he owed his daughter's life to one of his slaves, and promised me that he would free him if I could find him among the many.

CHAPTER X.

"Until then my natural disposition had led me to avoid the plantation where the blacks worked. It affected me too deeply to see the sufferings of those whom I could not aid. But when, the following day, my uncle suggested that I accompany him on his tour of inspection, I readily consented, hoping that I might find among the workers the one who had saved my beloved Marie.

"During our walk, I could not help noticing what power a master has over his slaves, but at the same time how dearly bought is that power. The negroes trembled in the presence of my uncle, and redoubled their labors; but in their fear of him what hatred there was!

"Irritable from habit, my uncle was ready to become angry at anything, when his clown Habibrah, who always followed him, suddenly called his attention to a black, who, worn out with labor, was asleep beneath a clump of date-trees. My uncle ran to him, shook him roughly, and ordered him to return to work. The negro, frightened, rose, and in so doing exposed a young Bengal rosebush, against which he had been unconsciously leaning, and which had been planted by my uncle. The bush was killed. The master, already irritated at what he called the slave's idleness, now became furious. Beside himself with rage, he unhooked from his waist the whip of steel thongs which he always carried on his walks, and raised it to strike the negro, who had dropped upon his knees. But the whip never fell. I shall never forget it. A strong hand suddenly stayed that of the colonist, and a black (the very one I sought!) cried out in French: —

"'Punish me, for I have offended you; but do not harm my brother, who has only touched your rosebush.'

"The sudden interference of the man to whom I owed Marie's life, his gestures, his look, the proud tone of his voice, struck me dumb. But his generous rashness, far from making my uncle ashamed, served only to increase his rage, and to turn it from the victim to his defender. My uncle, exasperated, disengaged himself from the negro's grasp, heaping threats upon him, and again raised the whip to strike him in turn. This time the whip was wrenched from his hand. The black broke the rod studded with nails, as one would break a straw, and stamped under foot the shameful instrument of torture. I was motionless with amazement, my uncle with fury; it was an unheard-of thing for his authority to be thus defied. His eyes looked as though they would spring from their sockets; his white lips trembled. The slave watched him an instant calmly; then suddenly he handed him, in a dignified way, an axe which he held.

"'White man,' said he, 'if you wish to strike me, at least use this axe.'

"My uncle, still beside himself with rage, would surely have done so, had I not interposed. I quickly seized the axe, and threw it into an adjacent *noira*.

"'What are you doing?' asked my uncle.

"'I am saving you,' I replied, 'the mistake of striking the man who saved your daughter. You owe Marie's life to this slave; this is the negro whom you promised to set free.'

"The moment was ill-chosen for referring to his promise. My words were scarcely heard by the indignant colonist.

"'His liberty!' he cried, 'yes, he deserves it! His liberty! We shall see what sort of liberty it is that the judges of the court-martial give him.'

"The ill-omened words petrified me. It was in vain that Marie and I begged for mercy. The negro whose negligence had been the cause of all the trouble was punished by a flogging; and his defender was sent to the dungeon of Fort Galifet, convicted of having raised his arm against a white man. From a slave to a master, this was a capital crime.

CHAPTER XI.

"You may imagine, gentlemen, how great was my interest and curiosity. I made inquiries about the prisoner, and discovered strange facts. They told me that his comrades seemed to have the greatest respect for him. Though a slave like them, it needed but a sign from him for them to obey him. He had not been born in the huts on the island; his father and mother were not known; several years before that, they said, a negro vessel had landed him at San Domingo. This fact made his influence over the others still more remarkable, not excepting even the *creoles*, who, as you probably know, gentlemen, usually have the greatest scorn for the Congo negroes (the term is unsuitable and too general a one, but by it is meant all the slaves brought from Africa).

"Although he seemed lost in a deep melancholy, his great strength and marvellous bearing made him very valuable on the plantations. He turned the wheels of the *norias* more quickly and for a longer time than the best horse; and often he did in one day the work of ten other slaves, in order to save them from the punishment inflicted for neglect or fatigue. So the slaves adored him, but their adoration was entirely different from the superstitious terror they felt for the fool Habibrah; it seemed to have some hidden cause; it was a sort of worship.

"The strangest thing, they continued, was that he was as gentle and as simple with his equals, who thought it an honor to obey him, as he was proud and haughty to his masters. It must be said that the privileged slaves, intermediate links as it were between slavery and despotism, joined to their low position the insolence of their authority, and took an

evil delight in overwhelming him with work and trials. Nevertheless, they could not but respect the proud spirit which had defied my uncle. None of them had ever dared to punish him. If he was condemned, twenty negroes offered to take his place; and he, immovable, calmly assisted at their punishment, as though they were only doing their duty. This strange man was known among the huts as *Pierrot*.

CHAPTER XII.

"THESE details roused my youthful curiosity. Marie, full of gratitude and sympathy, added to my enthusiasm; and Pierrot became of such interest to us that I resolved to see him, and perhaps help him. I considered how I could best speak with him.

"Although very young, as nephew of one of the richest colonists on the Cape, I was captain of the militia of the parish of l'Acul. Fort Galifet was entrusted to them, and to a detachment of yellow dragoons, whose chief, usually a sub-lieutenant in this company, commanded the fort. It happened, at this time, that the commander was the brother of a poor colonist for whom I had had the honor of doing a great service, and who was perfectly devoted to me" —

At this point in the story the listeners interrupted d'Auverney, to shout Thadée's name.

"You have guessed rightly, gentlemen," replied the captain. "You can easily see that it was not hard to gain from him access to the negro's dungeon. As captain of the militia, I had the right to visit the fort. However, to avoid rousing the suspicion of my uncle, whose anger was still great, I was careful to go there when he was taking his afternoon nap. All the soldiers, except those on guard, were sleeping. Guided by Thadée, I reached the door of the prison. Thadée opened it and withdrew. I entered.

"The black was seated; he could not stand on account of his great height. He was not alone; an enormous mastiff rose and advanced toward me, growling. 'Rask!' cried the black. The young mastiff became silent, and returned to the feet of his master, where he was eating some scanty crusts.

"I was in my uniform, and the light which came from the

vent-hole into this narrow dungeon was so faint that Pierrot could not distinguish me.

"'I am ready,' he said calmly.

"He half rose.

"'I am ready,' he repeated.

"'I thought,' said I, surprised at the freedom of his movements, 'I thought that you were in irons.'

"My emotion made my voice tremble, but the prisoner did not appear to notice it.

"He pushed away something which rattled.

"'Irons! I broke them.'

"In the tone of the last words there was something which seemed to say, 'I was not born to wear irons.' I continued:—

"'I was not told that they allowed you a dog.'

"'It is I who had him brought here.'

"I was growing more and more astonished. The prison-door was locked on the outside by a triple bolt. The vent-hole was hardly six thumbs in width, and was barred across with two iron rails. He seemed to comprehend the direction of my thoughts; for, rising as much as the low ceiling would permit, he detached, without effort, an enormous stone below the vent-hole, removed the two bars which were fastened on the outside of the stone, and thus effected an opening large enough for two men to pass through. This opening looked out upon the banana and cocoanut trees which covered the mountain against which the fort was built.

"Surprise rendered me mute. Suddenly a ray of light fell upon my face. The prisoner recoiled as though he had unconsciously stepped upon a serpent, his head striking against a stone in the ceiling. An indescribable mingling of a thousand different feelings, a strange expression of hatred, kindness, and sad surprise, passed rapidly across his face. But quickly recovering himself, in less than an instant his features became calm and cold again, and he gazed indifferently at me, as though he did not know me.

"'I can still live two days without food,' said he.

"I made a gesture of horror, and noticed how thin he was. He added: —

"'My dog will only eat from my hand; had I not been able to enlarge the opening, poor Rask would have died of hunger. It would better be I than he, since I must die anyway.'

"'No,' I cried, 'no! you shall not die of hunger.'

"He did not understand.

"'No doubt,' said he, smiling bitterly, 'I can still live two days without food; but I am ready, officer; to-day would be better than to-morrow; only do not harm Rask.'

"I understood then what he had meant by, '*I am ready.*' Convicted of a crime punishable by death, he thought that I had come to lead him to the scaffold; and this man of colossal strength, when every means of flight were open to him, was as gentle and docile as a little child, repeating the words, '*I am ready!*'

"'Do not harm Rask,' he said again.

"I could contain myself no longer.

"'What!' I cried, 'you not only take me for your executioner, but you even doubt my treatment of your poor dog, who has never wronged me.'

"He was touched, his voice changed.

"'White man,' said he, extending his hand, 'white man, pardon. I love my dog; and,' he added, after a moment's silence, 'your people have done me much harm.'

"I embraced him, I grasped his hand, and let him know who I was.

"'Do you not know me?' I asked.

"'I know that you are a white man, and whoever a white man is, a black is of so little importance to him. Besides, I have cause enough to complain of you.'

"'For what reason?' I asked, astonished.

"'Have you not twice saved my life?'

"The strange accusation made me smile.

"He noticed it, and continued bitterly.

"'Yes, I ought to bear you ill-will. You rescued me from

a crocodile and a colonist; and what is still worse, you have robbed me of the right to hate you. I am indeed unhappy!'

"His strange words and ideas no longer surprised me. They were in perfect harmony with the man.

"'I owe you much more than you owe me,' I said. 'I owe to you the life of my *fiancée*, Marie.'

"The word was like an electric shock to him.

"'*Maria!*' he cried, in a choking voice; his head fell forward into his hands, which clutched each other violently, while deep sighs wrung themselves from his breast.

"I confess that my slumbering suspicions had been roused, but without anger, without jealousy. I was too close to happiness, he was too near death, for such a rival, had he been that, to excite in me anything but kindness and pity.

"Finally he raised his head.

"'Go!' said he, 'do not thank me.'

"After a pause, he added, —

"'But I belong to a class not inferior to yours!'

"These words were a revelation which greatly roused my curiosity. I begged him to tell me who he was, and what he had suffered; but he preserved a sombre silence.

"My manner, however, had touched him; my offer to help him, and my prayers, seemed to conquer his disgust of life. He went out and gathered some bananas and a huge cocoanut. Then he closed the opening, and began to eat. In talking with him, I saw that he spoke French and Spanish equally well, and that his mind was not uneducated; he knew several Spanish romances, which he sang with much expression. The man had been so strange in all other respects, that until then the purity of his language had not struck me. Again I asked him about himself, but he preserved the same silence. Finally I left him, telling my faithful Thadée to give him all the attention possible.

CHAPTER XIII.

"I saw him daily at the same hour. He caused me great anxiety; for, in spite of my prayers, my uncle obstinately refused to pardon him. I did not conceal my fear from Pierrot, but he heard me with indifference.

"Often Rask would come in while we were together, with a large palm-leaf tied about his neck. The negro would unfasten it, read the strange characters upon it, and then destroy it. I was not in the habit of questioning him.

"One day I entered without his apparently noticing me. He stood with his back to the door of his prison, singing a Spanish air in a sad voice: '*Yo que soy contrabandista*' (I who am a smuggler). When he finished, he turned to me suddenly: —

"'Brother,' said he, 'promise, if you ever doubt me, that all your suspicions shall vanish when you hear this song.'

"His glance was imposing. I promised what he asked without well knowing what he meant by the words: '*If ever you doubt me.*' He took the hollow rind of the nut which he had kept since the day I had first visited him, filled it with wine from the palm-tree, touched my lips to it, and emptied it at a draught. From that day he never addressed me in any way except as '*Brother.*'

"I was beginning to hope a little. My uncle did not seem as irritable as usual. The joys of my approaching marriage with his daughter had turned his thoughts into pleasanter channels. Marie, as well as myself, begged for the poor slave's pardon. Every day I explained to him that Pierrot had not meant to offend him, but that he only had prevented him from being too severe; I said that the black had, by his brave struggle with the crocodile, saved Marie from sure

death; and that we owed him, he his daughter, I my *fiancée;* and that, moreover, Pierrot was the strongest of all the slaves (I had given up gaining his liberty, and was only hoping for his life), that he alone did the work of ten, and that his arm by itself moved the cylinders of the sugar-mill. He listened, and gave me to understand that he would not follow up the accusation. I did not mention this to the black, wishing to enjoy the pleasure of telling him myself that he was entirely free, if I could gain this promise. What astonished me in the man was, that, although he believed that he had to die, he took advantage of none of the means of escape which were in his power. I spoke to him on this subject.

"'I must remain here,' he replied coldly; 'they would think that I was afraid.'

CHAPTER XIV.

"One morning Marie came to me, radiant, with a look on her sweet face that was more beautiful than the joy of a pure love; it was the thought of a good deed.

"'Listen,' said she; 'in three days it will be the 22d of August, our wedding-day. We shall soon' —

"I interrupted her:—

"'Marie, do not call it soon, when there are still three days.'

"She smiled and blushed.

"'Do not tease me, Léopold,' she continued; 'an idea has occurred to me which will make you happy. You know that yesterday I went to town with father to buy my wedding-jewels. I do not care very much about having these diamonds, which will make me no more beautiful in your eyes than I am already. I would give every pearl in the world for one of those flowers which that wretched man destroyed, with his bunch of marigolds; but never mind that. My father wants to give me all these things, and to please him I pretend that I want them. Yesterday I saw a *basquina* of china satin, with designs of great flowers on it, in a box of scented wood. It is very costly and very beautiful. My father noticed that this gown attracted me. As we came home, I asked him to give me a gift, as the ancient chevaliers used to do; you know he likes to be compared to them. He gave me his word of honor that he would give me anything I asked for. He thought it was the *basquina* of china silk; not at all, it was Pierrot's life. This shall be my wedding-gift.'

"I took my angel in my arms. My uncle's word was sacred to him; and when Marie went to claim the promise, I ran to Fort Galifet to tell Pierrot of his pardon, which was now assured.

"'Brother,' I cried as I entered, 'Brother, rejoice! Your life is saved! Marie asked it of her father as her wedding-gift.'

"The slave trembled.

"'Marie! Wedding! My life: How can all this go together?'

"'It is all very simple,' I explained. 'Marie, whose life you saved, is to be married.'

"'To whom?' cried the slave. His glance was fierce and terrible.

"'Do you not know?' I asked gently; 'to me.'

"His face became quiet again and resigned.

"'Ah! that is true,' said he; 'to be sure it is to you! When is the date?'

"'August 22.'

"'August 22! Are you mad?' he cried, with a look of agony and terror.

"Then he stopped. I watched him, amazed. After a pause he shook my hand, and said earnestly: —

"'Brother, I owe you so much that I must give you some advice. Listen to it. Go to the Cape and be married before August 22.'

"In vain I asked the meaning of these mysterious words.

"'Farewell,' he said solemnly. 'Perhaps I have already said too much; but I despise ingratitude more than I do perjury.'

"I left him, full of anxiety and indecision, but I was very soon cheered by the thoughts of my approaching happiness.

"My uncle withdrew his complaint that same day. I returned to the fort to free Pierrot. Thadée, knowing that he was pardoned, entered the cell with me, but Pierrot was no longer there. Rask, who was alone, came to me in a caressing way; about his neck was tied a palm-leaf. I took it and read these words: 'Thank you, you have saved my life a third time. Brother, forget not your promise.' Below were written, like a signature, these words: '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*'

"Thadée was even more surprised than I; he did not know the secret of the vent-hole, and imagined that the negro had changed himself into a dog. I let him think what he pleased, content in exacting silence for what he had seen.

"I wanted to take away Rask with me; but, in leaving the fort, he hid in the adjoining hedge, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XV.

"My uncle was very angry at the slave's escape. He ordered that a search be made, and wrote to the governor that if he found Pierrot, he (the governor) might do as he pleased with him. The 22d of August arrived. My marriage with Marie was celebrated with great pomp in the parish church of l'Acul. How happy she was on that day, from which was to date all our trouble! I was intoxicated with a joy that one cannot understand, unless one has experienced it. I had completely forgotten Pierrot and his ominous advice. At last the evening came for which I had so long waited. My young wife retired to the bridal-chamber, but I was detained by a trifling but necessary duty. As captain of the militia, I was compelled that evening to make a tour of the posts of l'Acul; this precaution was absolutely necessary on account of the trouble in the colony, and the revolts of the blacks, which, although promptly quelled, had occurred in the preceding June and July, and even in the early part of August, in the Thibaud and Lagoscette settlements, and especially on account of the ill-humor of the free mulattoes, which the recent punishment of the rebel Ogé had served to augment. My uncle was the first to remind me of my duty, and I had to resign myself to it. I donned my uniform, and left. I visited the first stations without seeing any cause for alarm; but toward midnight, as I was strolling dreamily along near the batteries which skirted the bay, I noticed on the horizon a red glow, which rose and spread from the side of Limonade and San-Louis du Morin. The soldiers and I at first thought it came from some accidental fire; but a moment later the flames became so apparent, and the smoke, driven by the wind, was so dense and dark, that I

turned quickly back to the fort to sound the alarm and send aid. As I passed by the huts of our blacks, I was surprised at the unusual agitation which reigned there. The most of them were already awake, and were talking in the most excited manner. A strange name, *Bug-Jargal*, uttered with reverence, rang out over and over again in the midst of their unintelligible jargon. However, I managed to catch a few words, and discovered that the blacks of the northern plain were in open revolt, and that they had set fire to the settlements and plantations on the other side of the Cape. Crossing a swampy place, I ran against a pile of axes and hatchets hidden in the rushes and reeds. Thoroughly alarmed, I placed the soldiers of l'Acul under arms without delay, and ordered them to watch the slaves; then quiet was at length restored.

"However, the trouble seemed increasing at every moment, and it looked as though it were approaching du Limbé. Even the distant sound of artillery and fusillade could be heard. Toward two o'clock in the morning my uncle, whom I had roused, could not conceal his anxiety, and ordered me to send to l'Acul, a company of soldiers under the command of the lieutenant; and so, while my poor Marie slept or waited for me, I set out for the Cape with the other soldiers. We did this by order of my uncle, who was, as I have already said, a member of the Provincial Assembly.

"I shall never forget the sight of that city as I approached it. The flames were licking up the surrounding plantations, and spreading a lurid glare over all, half-obscured by the clouds of smoke which the wind blew across the streets. Showers of sparks from the crackling sugar-cane were dropping like falling snow upon the roofs of the houses and the rigging of the vessels anchored in the stream. Every moment the city of the Cape was threatened with fire no less fatal than that to which the surrounding country was a victim. It was a frightful and imposing spectacle to see, on one side, the pale inhabitants risking their very lives in their terrible

struggle to save the one roof which was to be all that was left them of such wealth; while, on the other side, the ships, fearing a like fate, but favored at least by the wind which was fatal to the colonists, set out with full sail across a sea tinged with the bloody fire of incendiarism.

CHAPTER XVI.

"DEAFENED by the cannon from the forts, the cries of the fugitives, and the distant noise of falling buildings, I did not know in what direction to turn, when I met, on the place of arms, the captain of the yellow dragoons, who offered to guide us. I will not stop, gentlemen, to describe the picture of the burning plain. Others have painted the early disasters of the Cape, and I must pass quickly over these recollections of blood and fire. I will merely state that the rebel slaves were already masters of the Dondon, Terrier-Rouge, of the city of Ouanaminte, and even of the unfortunate plantations of the Limbé, a fact which filled me with anxiety on account of its close proximity to l'Acul. I rushed to the house of the governor, Monsieur de Blanchelande. Everything there was in confusion. I asked him to give me orders, begging him to look to the safety of l'Acul, which was thought already to be in danger. There were with him Monsieur de Rouvray, the field-marshal and one of the chief property owners of the island; Monsieur de Touzard, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of the Cape; some members of the Colonial and Provincial Assemblies, and several of the best-known colonists. At the time of my arrival they were holding an agitated meeting.

"'Governor,' a member of the Provincial Assembly was saying, 'that is only too true; they are the slaves, and not the free half-breeds. We have been expecting and predicting it for a long time.'

"'You predicted it, without really believing it would happen,' bitterly replied a member of the Colonial Assembly, called the *General Assembly*. 'You said so, in order to gain credit at our expense; and you were so far from expecting a real uprising of the slaves, that it was the intrigues of your

Assembly, which in 1789 pretended that famous and absurd revolt of the three thousand blacks on the mountain of the Cape, a revolt in which only one man was killed, and he by his own comrades!'

"'I tell you,' replied the *Provincial*, 'that we see farther ahead than you. It is very simple. We remained here to watch the affairs of the colony, while your Assembly went to France to decree that absurd ovation, which was reprimanded by the National Representatives; *ridiculus mus!*'

"The Colonial member replied scornfully:

"'Our fellow-citizens re-elected us unanimously!'

"'It was you,' replied the other, 'it was your exaggeration that beheaded that miserable wretch. You appeared in a café without a tricolored cockade; it was you who hung the mulatto Lacombe for a petition beginning with the *unusual* words, "In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost!"'

"'That is false!' cried the other. 'It is the war of principles and privileges, of the *bossus* and the *crochus!*'

"'I have always thought, sir, that you were an Independent!'

"At this term of reproach, his opponent replied triumphantly:

"'That is confessing that you are a White Cockade. I leave you under the weight of such a confession!'

"The quarrel might have gone further, had not the governor interfered.

"'Well, gentlemen! what has all this to do with the present danger which threatens us? Advise me, instead of arguing with each other. Here is the news which comes to me. The revolt began this evening in the settlement of Turpin. The slaves, led by an English negro named Bouckmann, have destroyed the shops in the settlements of Clement, Trémès, Flaville, and Noé. They have burned all the plantations, and massacred the colonists in a most cruel manner. I can make you comprehend the horror of it all in a word. Their

standard is the body of a child, stuck on the point of a sword.'

"Groans of horror interrupted Monsieur de Blanchelande.

"'This is what is taking place,' he continued, 'outside. Within all is confusion. Several inhabitants of the Cape have killed their slaves; fear made them cruel. The gentlest and bravest are contented to lock up the slaves. The *petits blancs* (whites, not property-owners, carrying on some industry in the colony) accuse the half-breeds of these troubles. Several mulattoes have just escaped, being victims of the popular fury. I gave them a church, guarded by a battalion, as a place of shelter. Now, to prove that they have not the same intelligence as the revolting blacks, the half-breeds have asked me for a post to defend, and firearms.'

"'Do not grant them!' cried a voice, which I recognized as that of the planter suspected of being a half-breed, and with whom I had fought. 'Do not give firearms to the mulattoes, Governor.'

"'You do not want to fight, then?' a colonist asked quickly.

"The other appeared not to hear, and continued: —

"'The half-breeds are our worst enemies. They alone are to be feared by us. I know that we may expect a revolt from them, and not from the slaves. Are the slaves of any account?' The poor man was hoping by his invectives against the mulattoes to separate himself from them completely, and to destroy in the minds of the whites who heard him all idea of his belonging to this despised class. The effort was too cowardly to succeed. A murmur of disapproval proved it.

"'Yes, sir,' cried the old field-marshal De Rouvray, 'the slaves are of some account; they are forty against three; and we would indeed have cause to complain, had we only whites like yourself to fight against the negroes and mulattoes.'

"The colonist bit his lip.

"'General,' resumed the governor, 'what do you think of the petition of the mulattoes?'

"'Give them firearms, Governor!' exclaimed Monsieur de Rouvray, 'let us sail under all conditions!' And, turning to the suspected colonist, 'Do you hear, sir? Arm yourselves.'

"The humiliated colonist withdrew in concentrated rage.

"The clamor and shouts of agony from the city began to be heard at the governor's, and reminded the members of the council for what they had met.

"Monsieur de Blanchelande gave a hastily pencilled order to the aide-de-camp, and broke the silence by:—

"'The half-breeds want arms, gentlemen; but there are several other steps to be taken first.'

"'The Provincial Assembly must be convened,' cried the member who had been speaking as I entered.

"'The Provincial Assembly!' replied his opponent of the Colonial Assembly. 'Why does such a thing as this Provincial Assembly exist?'

"'Because you are a member of the Colonial Assembly!' replied the White Cockade.

"The Independent interrupted him.

"'I know neither a *Colonial* nor a *Provincial* Assembly. There is only a *General* Assembly, sir.'

"'Well,' replied the White Cockade, 'I will tell you this; there is none other except the *National* Assembly of Paris.'

"'Convene the Provincial Assembly!' repeated the Independent, laughing, 'as though it had not been dissolved as soon as the general decided to hold meetings here.'

"A general protest burst from the members, who were weary of this tiresome discussion.

"'Gentlemen,' said a cultivator, 'while you are engaged in all this nonsense, what is becoming of my cotton-trees and my cochineal?'

"'And of my four hundred thousand plants of indigo at the Limbé?' added a planter.

"'And my negroes, paid thirty dollars a head?' said a captain of a slave-ship.

"'Every minute you waste,' continued another colonist,

'costs me, watch and price-list in hand, ten hundredweight of sugar, which, at seventeen piasters the hundredweight, makes one hundred and thirty pounds and ten sous, in French money!'

"'The Colonial, which you term "*General,*" is an usurper!' cried the other member, adding to the confusion by his loud voice; 'let it stay at Port-au-Prince, and issue decrees for two leagues of earth and two days of duration; but let it leave us here in peace. The Cape belongs to the Provincial Congress of the north, and to that alone!'

"'I assume,' continued the Independent, 'that the governor has no right to convene any assembly except the general one of the representatives of the colony, the president of which is Monsieur de Cadusch.'

"'But where is your president, Monsieur de Cadusch?' asked the White Cockade; 'where is your assembly? As yet only four members have arrived, while every member of the Provincial Assembly is present. Do you yourself want to represent a whole assembly, a whole colony?'

"This rivalry between the two members, faithful echoes of their respective assemblies, again brought down the intervention of the governor.

"'Gentlemen, of what use are your eternal assemblies, the *Provincial,* the *General,* the *Colonial,* the *National?* Would you help the decisions of this Assembly by calling in three or four others?'

"'Zounds!' cried General de Rouvray, in a voice of thunder, striking the table violently, 'what nonsense this is! I would rather pound my chest with a franc. Of what use are these two assemblies, fighting like two companies of soldiers going to an attack? Well, convene both of them, Governor. I will form them both into two regiments, and march against the blacks; and we shall see if their guns can make as much noise as their tongues.'

"After this vigorous speech, he leaned toward his neighbor (myself), and said in a low tone: 'What can you expect a

governor on the side of the King of France to do between two assemblies of San Domingo, who think themselves sovereigns? They are fine speakers and lawyers, who spoil everything in this metropolis. If I had the honor of being the lieutenant-general, I would throw all this out of the door. I would say, "The King reigns, and I govern." I would throw the responsibility of the so-called representatives to the devil; and with twelve crosses of Saint Louis, promises in the name of His Majesty, I would sweep every rebel onto the island of the Tortue, which formerly was inhabited by freebooters like themselves. Remember what I tell you, young man. *Philosophers* brought forth *philanthropists*, who bore *negrophiles*, who produce the *white eaters*, so-called until a Greek or a Latin name is found for them. These pretended liberal ideas, which in France rouse one's spirits, are poison in the tropics. The negroes must be gently dealt with, not suddenly called to freedom. All the horrors which you see to-day began at the *Massiac Club;* and the revolt of the slaves only offsets the fall of the Bastile.'

"While the old soldier was explaining his politics, which, although narrow, were frank and full of conviction, the stormy discussion continued. A colonist, one of the few who were revolution-mad, and who called himself Citizen-General C——, because he had been present at several bloody executions, cried out: —

"'Punishment is more needed than war. The nations want terrible examples; let us frighten the blacks! It was I who quieted the revolts of June and July, by planting the heads of fifty slaves along the road to my plantation, as I would plant palm-trees. Let us all join together, and carry out the plan I am going to suggest. Let us protect the approaches to the Cape with the negroes we have.'

"'What rashness! How absurd!' came from all sides.

"'You do not understand, gentlemen,' continued the *Citizen-General.* 'Let us make a cordon of negro heads about the city, from Fort Picolet to Caracol; their rebel

companions will not dare to approach. One must sacrifice one's self for the common cause at a time like this. I will begin. I have five hundred slaves who have not revolted; I will offer them to you.'

"The dreadful proposition was received with cries of horror.

"'It is frightful! It is horrible!' exclaimed every one.

"'It is acts of this kind which have lost everything,' said a colonist. 'If they had not been in such haste to execute the last rebels of June, July, and August, they could have found the thread of the conspiracy, which the hangman's axe cut in two.'

"The Citizen C—— preserved an angry silence for a moment, then he muttered between his teeth, —

"'However, I did not think I should be suspected. I am connected with the negrophiles; I am in correspondence with Brissot and Pruneau de Pomme-Gouge, in France; Hans-Sloane, in England; Magaw, in America; Pezll, in Germany; Olivarius, in Denmark; Wadstrohm, in Sweden; Peter Paulus, in Holland; Avendaño, in Spain; and Abbé Pierre Tamburini, in Italy!'

"His voice rose as he continued to enumerate the list of negrophiles. Finally, he ended with, —

"'But there are no philosophers here!'

"Monsieur de Blanchelande, for the third time, asked the members for suggestions.

"'Governor,' said some one, 'my advice is for us all to embark on The Leopard, which is anchored in the river.'

"'Set a price on Bouckmann's head,' cried another.

"'Let us inform the Governor of Jamaica of all this,' said a third.

"'Yes, so that he will have another chance for sending us the absurd help of five hundred guns,' cried a member of the Provincial Assembly. 'Governor, send an advice-boat to France, and let us wait!'

"'Wait, wait!' shouted Monsieur de Rouvray. 'And will

the blacks wait? And will the fire which is already burning our city wait? Monsieur de Touzard, attack the General Assembly, take guns and go after the rebels with your soldiers and hunters. Governor, have camps pitched in the parishes of the east; establish posts at the Trou and Vallières; I will take charge of the plains of Fort Dauphin; I will direct my forces there. My grandfather was field-marshal of the regiment of Normandie, and served under Marshal de Vauban; I have studied Folard and Bezout, and have some experience in defending a country. Besides, the plains of Fort Dauphin are almost surrounded by the sea and the Spanish frontiers; they are almost an island, and will be a defence in themselves; Môle, which is almost an island, also offers similar advantages. Let us make use of all this, and act!'

"The energetic and forcible words of the veteran silenced the discord and discussion. The general was right. The feeling that each had a personal interest in the matter brought all to Monsieur de Rouvray's side; and while the governor shook him gratefully by the hand, telling the brave general that he realized the value of his advice, although it had been given as orders, and the importance of his aid, all the colonists called for the prompt execution of the proposed measures.

"The two members of the rival Assemblies alone took no part in the general discussion. They were muttering in their seats the words, '*Encroachment of executive power, of hasty decision and responsibility.*'

"I seized this opportunity to obtain from Monsieur de Blanchelande the orders for which I was impatiently waiting; and at last I left, rallied my men, and in spite of the fatigue of every one except myself, we set out immediately upon the road to l'Acul.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Day was beginning to break. I was on the place of arms, awakening the soldiers asleep on their cloaks, the yellow and the red dragoons together, the fugitives of the plain, the beasts, and the luggage of every kind, which had been brought into the city by the planters from the surrounding country. I was trying to find my company in all this confusion, when suddenly I saw a yellow dragoon, covered with dust and perspiration, running toward me at full speed. I went forward to meet him, and from his few excited words I learned to my consternation that my fears were realized; that the revolt had reached the plains of l'Acul, and that the blacks were already attacking Fort Galifet, where the soldiers and the colonists were. I must admit that Fort Galifet was not much of a fort; in San Domingo any earthwork is called a *fort.*

"There was not a moment to be lost. I seized horses for those of my soldiers whom I could find, and, led by the dragoon, I reached my uncle's estates about ten o'clock.

"I hardly glanced at the immense plantations, which were nothing but a sea of flame, billowing across the plain in great waves of smoke. Now and then the wind blew down huge trunks of trees, bristling with fire.

"A frightful crackling, mingled with shouts and falling buildings, seemed to answer the distant howls of the blacks, whom we heard, but whom we could not see. The loss of such wealth was nothing to me. I had but one thought, Marie's safety. If she were secure, what mattered all the rest? I knew that she was in the fort, and I prayed God to let me reach her in time. This hope alone sustained me in my agony, and gave me the courage and strength of a lion.

"At length a turn in the road brought the fort into sight.

The tricolored flag still floated from the roof, and a well-fed fire was just beginning to creep up over the walls. I gave a cry of delight. 'Forward! spur the horses! give them free rein!' I cried to my comrades. And, increasing our speed, we crossed the fields toward the fort, below which we could see the home of my uncle still standing, but with the doors and windows shattered. It glowed crimson in the light of the flames, but had not yet caught fire; for the wind was blowing from the sea, and the house was at a distance from the plantations.

"A crowd of blacks, hidden in the house, all at once appeared at the windows, even upon the roof; and torches, pikes, and axes shone in the midst of the shots they were firing upon the fort; while more of their number climbed, fell back, and mounted again upon the ladders they had placed against the besieged walls. This sea of blacks, ebbing and flowing, as it were, against the gray walls, looked, at a distance, like a swarm of ants trying to clamber upon the back of a great turtle, and which were thrown off from time to time by a shake from the slow animal. At last we reached the first fortifications. Glancing at the flag which waved above it, I called on my soldiers in the name of their families, who, like mine, were behind the walls we were going to save. A general cry was my answer; and forming my squadron into columns, I made ready to give the signal, and charge upon the besieging forces. Just then a great shout rose from the *enceinte* of the fort, a cloud of smoke closed in the whole building, rolling up about the walls, whence came a noise like a roaring furnace. A fierce light burst out, and we saw something crimson rising above Fort Galifet. All was over!

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I WILL not describe my feelings at the horrible sight. The fort captured, its defenders, twenty families, massacred; all this, I confess to my shame, took place in an instant. Marie was lost to me! Lost a few hours after she had been given to me forever! Lost by my own fault; for had I not left her to obey my uncle's orders, I might at least have defended her or died with her, which in a way would not have been losing her! These thoughts made me mad. My despair was turned to remorse.

"But my companions, driven to fury, cried, 'Revenge!' and we threw ourselves, with sword and pistol, into the midst of the conquering insurgents. Although their numbers were greater than ours, the blacks fled at our approach; we could see them distinctly on the right, the left, before, behind us, cutting down the whites, and hurrying on to burn the fort. Our rage increased at their cowardly acts.

"Thadée, covered with wounds, appeared at one of the posterns of the fort.

"'Captain,' said he, 'your Pierrot is a sorcerer, an *obi* as these d—— negroes say, or a devil at least; you arrived and all was saved, when suddenly he enters the fort, I know not how, and look! As to your uncle, and his family, and'—

"'Marie!' I cried, 'where is Marie?'

"At this moment a huge black came out from the burning wall, bearing in his arms a young woman who was screaming and throwing her arms about wildly. The woman was Marie; the black was Pierrot.

"'Traitor!' I cried.

"I pointed my pistol at him; one of the rebels threw himself in front of the ball, and fell to the ground, dead. Pierrot

turned, and seemed to be trying to speak to me; then he was lost with his burden behind the stalks of burning sugar-cane. An instant, and a huge dog followed him, bearing in his teeth a cradle in which lay my uncle's youngest child. I recognized the dog; it was Rask. Carried away by my rage, I shot my second pistol at him, but missed fire.

"I ran after him like a madman; but my night tramps, my having been without rest or food for so long, my fears for Marie, the sudden change from happiness to despair, — all these mental troubles, much more than the bodily fatigue, were too much for me; and I had not taken many steps before I began to stagger, a mist rose before my eyes, and I fell fainting to the ground.

CHAPTEN XIX.

"When I recovered consciousness, I was in the ruined home of my uncle, in Thadée's arms. This good fellow was looking anxiously at me.

"'Victory!' cried he, as soon as he saw life returning. 'Victory! The negroes have taken to flight, and the Captain has come to life again.'

"I interrupted his joyful cry by my one thought, 'Where is Marie?'

"My mind was not yet entirely clear; I remembered the fact that I was in trouble, but nothing more. Thadée's eyes fell. Then my memory rushed back. I remembered my horrible wedding-night, and the huge negro carrying Marie away in his arms among the flames. The frightful light which had broken over the colony, showing the whites and the blacks who were their enemies, made me see in Pierrot, who had been so good, so generous, so devoted, he who three times owed his life to me, a rival, a monster of ingratitude. The fact of my wife's having been carried away on our very wedding-night proved my suspicions, and I felt that the singer of the woods was no other than Marie's wretched lover. What a change a few hours had made!

"Thadée told me that he had followed Pierrot and his dog in vain; that the negroes had withdrawn, although they could easily have overpowered my small forces; and that it would not be possible to stop the burning of the family estates.

"I asked if he knew what had become of my uncle. Thadée took my hand in silence, and leading me to an alcove, pulled back the curtains.

"My poor uncle lay there in a bed of blood, a dagger thrust deep into his heart. By the peaceful look on his face, he

must have been stabbed in sleep. The bed of the dwarf Habibrah, who always slept at the foot of my uncle's, was covered with blood; and the lace coat of the poor fool lay upon the floor a few feet away, covered with the same red stains.

"I did not doubt for an instant but that the clown had been killed by his comrades, on account of his attachment to his master, and perhaps even while trying to save him. I bitterly reproached myself for my wrong ideas concerning Habibrah and Pierrot; I wept not only for my uncle's sudden death, but for his poor fool too. I gave orders that a search be made for his body; but it could not be found, so I supposed that the negroes had thrown it into the flames. I ordered prayers to be said for the repose of Habibrah's faithful soul at my father-in-law's funeral.

CHAPTER XX.

"Fort Galifet was in ruins. Our settlements were destroyed; to linger longer there was useless and impossible. That very evening we returned to the Cape.

"Once there, an intense longing seized me. The effort to conquer my despair had been too great, and the reaction had come. I became delirious. All my hopes blasted, my love outraged, friendship betrayed, my future lost, and beneath all, this mad jealousy. My reason left me. Fire seemed to run through my veins; my head throbbed; rage was in my heart. I pictured Marie in another's power, the power of a lover, a master, a slave, in short, Pierrot! They told me afterwards that I sprang from my bed, and that six men were required to keep me from dashing out my brains against the wall. Oh! why did I not die then?

"The crisis passed. The physicians, Thadée's nursing, and some strange hold that youth has upon life, conquered death, which would have been welcomed by me. I grew better at the end of ten days, and was not sorry. I was glad to live a while for the sake of revenge.

"Before I had even fully recovered, I went to Monsieur de Blanchelande to ask to have some duty assigned me. He wanted to give me a post to defend; but I begged him to let me go as a volunteer in one of the moving companies, which occasionally were sent against the blacks, in order to clear the country.

"The Cape had been speedily fortified. The revolt was making alarming progress. The negroes began to rebel at Port-au-Prince; Biassou commanded those from du Limbé, Dondon and l'Acul; Jean François had himself proclaimed *generalissimo* of the revolt of the plain of Maribarou; Bouckmann,

since known on account of his tragic death, guarded with his brigands the shores of the Limonade; and the companies of the Morne-Rouge recognized a leader in a negro named Bug-Jargal.

"The character of this leader, if accounts are to be believed, was a strange contrast to the fierceness of the others. Bouckmann and Biassou invented a thousand means of death for the prisoners, but Bug-Jargal strove to furnish them means of escape from the island. The former bargained with the Spanish ships, which cruised about their coast, and sold them the booty of the unfortunate ones whom they drove to flight. Bug-Jargal sunk several of these corsairs. Bug-Jargal ordered Monsieur Colas de Maigné and eight other distinguished colonists to be removed from the rack, where Bouckmann had them placed. A thousand other kind acts are told of him, but they are too many to repeat here.

"My hope of revenge did not seem near at hand. Pierrot was no longer mentioned. The rebels commanded by Biassou continued to trouble the Cape. Once they even dared to scale the mountain over the city, and it was all the soldiers could do to repulse them. The governor resolved to drive them into the interior of the island. The soldiers of l'Acul, Limbé, Ouanaminte, and Maribarou were added to the regiment at the Cape, and to the strong yellow and red companies. This constituted our active army. The militia from Dondon and the Quartier-Dauphin were re-enforced by a body of volunteers, under command of the merchant Ponçignon. This formed the garrison of the city.

"The governor wished to get rid of Bug-Jargal, of whom he was afraid. He sent against him the soldiers from Ouanaminte and a battalion from the Cape. Two days later, the men returned, completely routed. The governor persisted in his efforts, and sent the same company again, with a re-enforcement of fifty yellow dragoons and four hundred soldiers from Maribarou. This second army received worse treatment than the first. Thadée was of the number, and was so angry at

the defeat, that he resolved to avenge himself on his own account on Bug-Jargal."

A tear moistened the eye of d'Auverney; he crossed his arms upon his breast, and for some moments was lost in deep contemplation. Then he continued: —

CHAPTER XXI.

"News came to us that Bug-Jargal had left Morne-Rouge, and was advancing by way of the mountains to join Biassou. The governor sprang up joyfully:—

"'We have them, then!' said he, clapping his hands. The following day the army of the colonists was moved one league in front of the Cape. The insurgents, at our approach, hastily retreated from Port-Margot and Fort Galifet, where they had established a post, protected by great batteries which had been raised at the sides; they had all fled to the mountains. The governor was delighted. We continued our march. Each of us, as we passed across the arid and desolate plains, strove to recognize the spot of his former habitation, his wealth; but often he could find no trace of them.

"Sometimes our march was hindered by the burning forests and savannas, which had caught fire from the fields. In the climate where the soil is moist, where vegetation flourishes, the burning of a forest is accompanied by strange phenomena. The burning and crackling sounds in the distance are like the overflowing of a cataract. The falling trees, the snapping of the branches, the seething of the roots underground, the trembling shrubs, the whistling of the flames through the air, — all increase in force as the fire continues its progress. Sometimes one sees a clump of green trees still unharmed, while in their midst rages the flaming storm. Suddenly a tongue of fire appears at one end of the green clump, a serpent of bluish flame rapidly licks along the trunks, and in an instant their heads are lost beneath a moving shower of gold; all burn at once. Then a canopy of smoke is broken by the wind, and winds about the flames. It rolls and unrolls, rises, falls, scatters, and grows dense again until it is black. Then a fringe of fire

runs along its edge, a great noise is heard, the fringe disappears behind a cloud of smoke, and from the blackness drops a shower of crimson sparks, that glow for a long time upon the desolate earth.

CHAPTER XXII.

"The evening of the third day we entered the narrow passes of the Grande-River. The blacks were supposed to be twenty leagues over the mountain.

"We pitched our camp on a slope, which they must have used for the same purpose, it looked so trodden down. The position was not a good one, but we were at least quiet there. Great rocks rose on all sides, covered with dense forests. The ruggedness of the place had given to it the name of *Dompte-Mulatre.* The Grande-River ran at the back of the camp; hemmed in by both shores, it was at this point both narrow and deep. The banks sloped down abruptly, and were covered with bushes so thick that one could not see through them. Often even the water was invisible on account of the bind-weeds clinging to the branches of the flowering red maples, which grew among the bushes, and flung their arms from one bank to the other, intertwining in a thousand various ways, till they spread over the river like great green tents. As one looked down upon them from the neighboring rocks, they seemed like meadows still wet with dew. A faint ripple, or an occasional wild teal alighting on the top of this blossoming carpet, alone marks the course of the river.

"Before long the gold of the sun's rays had disappeared from the sharp point of the cliffs of the Doudon; by degrees twilight settled over the camp, and the silence was broken only by the cry of the crane and the measured tread of the sentinel.

"All at once, over our heads were heard the terrible songs of '*Oua-Nassé,*' and of the '*Camp du Grand Pré;*' the palms, acomas, and cedar-trees on the rocks above us were on fire, and in the lurid light of the flames we saw bands of negroes and

mulattoes, whose bronze skins gleamed red in the fire. They were the troops of Biassou.

"The danger was imminent. The commanders awoke with a start, and rushed to collect the soldiers; the drum beat the call; the trumpet gave the alarm; our lines were hastily formed; and the rebels, instead of taking advantage of our disorder, watched us without moving, singing, '*Oua-Nassé.*'

"One gigantic black alone appeared on the highest of the second line of crags which rose above the Grande-River; a flame-colored plume waved on his head; an axe was in his right hand, a red flag in his left. It was Pierrot! If I had had a carbine my rage would perhaps have driven me to a cowardly deed. The black repeated the refrain of '*Oua-Nassé,*' laid his flag upon the cliff, hurled his axe into our ranks, and sank into the depths of the river. I felt a thrill of regret, for I thought that he would not die by my hand. Then the blacks began to roll huge rocks upon us; a shower of balls and arrows fell on the cliff. Our soldiers were furious at being unable to reach their assailants, and fell, hopelessly, crushed by the rocks, riddled with shot, or pierced with arrows.

"Horrible disorder prevailed. Now and again a fearful noise seemed to rise from the Grande-River. It was a strange sight. The yellow dragoons, terribly hurt by the rocks which the rebels were pushing from the mountains, conceived the idea of fleeing, escaping beneath the thin ceiling of bind-weeds which covered the river. Thadée was the first to think of this ingenious plan."

At this point the story-teller was unexpectedly interrupted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

More than a quarter of an hour before this Sergeant Thadée, his right arm in a sling, had glided into a corner, unnoticed by any one, and by his gestures alone had been taking part in his master's story. At this point, thinking it would be disrespectful to pass by such direct praise, without a word of thanks to d'Auverney, he began to stammer in some confusion, —

"You are very good, Captain."

A burst of laughter followed. D'Auverney turned.

"What!" said he severely, "you here, Thadée! How is your arm?"

At the pronoun "you," so seldom used by his master, the features of the old soldier turned to a ruddy glow; he trembled, and turned aside his head as though to stop the tears which sprang to his eyes.

"I never thought," said he, in a low voice, "I never would have believed that my captain would need to use the pronoun *you* to his old sergeant."

The captain rose quickly.

"Forgive me, my old friend, forgive me. I did not know what I was saying; come, Thad, dost thou forgive me?"

Tears sprang to the eyes of the sergeant in spite of himself.

"There! this is the third time," he murmured, "but these are tears of joy."

Peace was restored. A short pause followed.

"But tell me, Thad," said the captain gently, "why didst thou leave the hospital?"

"Because, by your leave, I came to ask you, Captain, if you wanted the saddle-cloth with the gold lace used to-morrow on your war-horse?"

Henry began to laugh.

"You would better, Thadée, have asked the surgeon-major if you were to put two ounces of lint on your wounded arm."

"Or," said Paschal, "if you might drink a little wine to refresh you; meantime, here is some brandy. It cannot harm you. Take it, my brave sergeant."

Thadée advanced, bowed respectfully, begged pardon for taking the glass with his left hand, and drank to the health of the company. His spirits returned.

"You were there, Captain, when — well, yes, it was I who proposed going under the bind-weeds to prevent the Christians from being killed by the rocks. Our officer did not know how to swim, and feared he would drown, which was a natural feeling. Just then, by your leave, gentlemen, a huge rock fell past us into the river, but it did not sink on account of the weeds. 'It is much better,' said he then, 'to die like Pharaoh of Egypt than like Saint Étienne. We are not saints, and Pharaoh was a soldier like us.' My officer, who was a student, you see, was willing to take my advice, provided that I would try the experiment first; so I did. I went down the embankment; and grasping hold of the branch of a tree, I swung myself down, — when suddenly I felt my leg seized; I kicked, I cried, several sword-thrusts were given me; and then I saw all the dragoons, the devils, who had rushed down pell-mell beneath the bind-weeds. They were the blacks of the Morne-Rouge, who had been hiding there, unknown to us, probably in order to fall upon us like a heavy bag a moment after. That would not have been a good moment for fishing! They fought, they swore, they yelled. Being naked, they could act more quickly than we; but our shots told better than theirs. We swam with one arm, and fought with the other, as always happens in such cases. Those who could not swim, Captain, hung by one hand to the bind-weeds, and the blacks pulled them down by their feet. In the midst of the fray I saw a huge negro who was defending himself like Beelzebub against eight or ten of our men; I

swam across to him, and recognized Pierrot, otherwise Bug — But that was not discovered until later, was it, Captain? I recognized Pierrot. Since the fort had been taken, we had been enemies. I seized him by the throat, just as he was going to despatch me by a thrust of his dagger; but when he saw me, instead of killing me, he surrendered; that was very unfortunate, Captain, for had he not done so — But that will come by and by. As soon as the negroes saw that he was caught, they rushed at us in order to save him; the soldiers jumped into the water to help us; but Pierrot, no doubt seeing that all the negroes would be killed, uttered a few words that were perfect Greek to me, and they all left him. They plunged into the water, and disappeared in the twinkling of an eye. The battle under water would not have been bad, and would have been somewhat amusing too, if I had not lost a finger, and wet ten cartridges, and if — poor man! — but that was to be, Captain."

And the sergeant respectfully touched his foraging-cap with his left hand, and then raised it to the sky as though inspired.

D'Auverney seemed greatly agitated.

"Yes," said he; "yes, thou art right, my old Thadée, that night was fatal."

He would have fallen into one of his usual deep reveries, had not the others urged him to continue his story. So after a pause he resumed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"While the scene which Thadée has just described [Thadée, beaming, took his stand behind his captain], while this scene was taking place behind the mountain, I managed, with some of my men, to climb from bush to bush up to a peak called the *Peak of the Paon*, from the iridescent tints which the mica in the soil caused when the sun shone on it. This peak was on a level with the position held by the blacks. The way once opened, the summit was seen to be covered with soldiers; we began a brisk fusillade. The negroes were not as well armed as we, and could not hold out before so strong an attack; they began to be discouraged; we redoubled our efforts, and very soon the surrounding rocks were vacated by the rebels, who were careful, however, first to roll the bodies of their dead upon our ranks, still ranged in line-of-battle on the mountain. Then we cut down, and bound together with palm-leaves and cord, the trunks of several enormous wild cotton-trees, out of which the early inhabitants of the island used to make boats of a hundred oars each. By aid of this improvised bridge we were able to cross to the abandoned peaks.

"Thus one company held an advantageous position. The fact shook the courage of the insurgents. We sustained fire. Suddenly from Biassou's army came piteous cries, and shouts of Bug-Jargal. Great consternation prevailed. Several blacks appeared on the rock where the red flag was waving; they fell on their knees, raised the standard, and threw themselves with it into the waters of the Grande-River. That seemed to signify that their chief was either dead or captured.

"Our boldness had reached such a point, that I resolved to chase with side-arms the rebels from the rocks which they

were still occupying. I ordered a bridge of trees to be thrown across from our peak to the next, and I was the first to rush among the negroes. My men were just about to follow, when one of the rebels raised his axe, and cut the bridge into splinters. The pieces fell into the abyss, striking against the rocks with a frightful crash.

"I turned; and just then I felt myself seized by six or seven blacks, who unarmed me. I fought like a lion; but they bound me with strips of bark, without paying any attention to the balls which my men were raining upon them.

"My despair was soothed only when I heard victorious shouts about me an instant after; then I saw the blacks and the mulattoes climbing pell-mell up the steepest sides of the crags, and crying out in distress. My captors followed their example; the strongest one raised me on his shoulders, and bore me to the forest, springing from rock to rock with the agility of a deer. Before long the light of the fire ceased to guide him; there were only the feeble rays from the moon; and he began to walk more slowly.

CHAPTER XXV.

"After we had pushed through thickets and leaped over torrents, we reached a high valley, singularly wild in appearance. I had no idea where we were.

"The valley lay in the very heart of the mountains, in what they call at San Domingo *the double mountains.* It was a great green savanna, hemmed in by walls of bare rock, and dotted with clumps of pine, cayais, and palm-trees. The almost continual cold which pervades this island, although it seldom reaches freezing-point, was augmented by the fresh night air. Day was beginning to bring back the white light to the high cliffs about us; but the valley, which was still plunged in darkness, was lighted only by the many fires of the negroes; their rallying-point was there. The scattered numbers of their army were collecting in disorder. Frightened squads of blacks and mulattoes arrived every moment, crying out in distress or howling with rage. Fresh fires shone out like tiger's eyes in the darkness, showing that every instant the numbers were increasing.

"The negro whose prisoner I was, set me down at the foot of an oak, from whence I looked carelessly about upon the strange spectacle. The black tied me firmly with double knots about my waist to the trunk of the tree against which I was leaning, so that I could not move. He placed his red linen cap on my head, probably to indicate that I was his property; and after assuring himself that I could neither escape nor be carried away by any one, he went off a little distance. Then I spoke, and asked him in Creole patois if he belonged to the army of Dondon or Morne-Rouge. He looked at me in a proud way, and replied, "*Morne-Rouge!*" An idea came into my mind. I had heard of the generosity of

the leader of this army, Bug-Jargal; and although I was willing to die and thus end all my misery, I could not think of the tortures which might be in store for me from Biassou without horror. I asked nothing except to die without undergoing these tortures.

"Perhaps I was weak, but I think that at such a moment nature always rebels. I then thought that, if I could escape Biassou, I might obtain from Bug-Jargal a painless death, that of a soldier. I asked this negro of Morne-Rouge to take me to his chief, Bug-Jargal. He trembled. "Bug-Jargal!" he exclaimed, striking his forehead in despair; then suddenly growing angry, he shook his fist,—

"Biassou! Biassou!" After uttering this ominous name, he left me.

"The anger and the grief of the negro recalled to my mind the struggle from which we had concluded that the leader of the company of Morne-Rouge was dead or taken captive. I doubted this no longer, and resigned myself to Biassou's vengeance, with which the black seemed to threaten me.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"DARKNESS still hung over the valley, where the number of blacks and their fires were constantly increasing. Several negro women had just lighted a fire near me. From their appearance I saw that they were *griotes.* Their wrists and ankles were covered with shining bracelets of blue, red, and purple glass; gold hoops hung from their ears; every finger and toe was laden with rings, on their breast were amulets, *charms* hung from their necks; and their only clothing was an apron of vari-colored feathers. They were chanting songs, and they looked at me in a vague, wild way. Perhaps you do not know that among the blacks, in the various countries of Africa, there are those who are endowed with great talent for poetry and music, which they carry almost to madness. These negroes wander about from kingdom to kingdom, and are in barbarous countries what the ancient rhapsodists were, the English *minstrels* of the Middle Ages, the *minnesingers* of Germany, and the *troubadours* of France. They are called *griots.* Their wives, the *griotes,* are, like them, possessed with a mad spirit; and they accompany the barbaric songs of their husbands with indecent dances. They are a grotesque parody upon the *bayadères* of Hindustan, and the *almées* of Egypt. Several of these women now seated themselves, with their limbs crossed in the African fashion, not far from me, about a great fire of dried branches. The bright flames threw a lurid light upon their hideous faces as I watched them. They formed a circle, joined hands, and the oldest, who wore a heron plume in her hair, began to shout, '*Ouanga!*' I understood that they were about to perform one of the sorceries called by that name. They all repeated the word '*Ouanga!*' After a moment's silence, the oldest pulled out

a lock of her hair, and threw it into the flames, uttering these words, '*Malé o guiab!*' which in negro language signifies 'I will go to the devil.' The other *griotes* followed the example of their leader, threw a lock of their hair into the fire, and cried solemnly, '*Malé o guiab!*'

"This strange invocation, and the burlesque grimaces with which it was accompanied, threw me into that state of involuntary laughter which often seizes the most serious-minded or the most sorrowful person, and which is called a fool's laugh. I strove in vain to check it; it burst out, and coming as it did from my wretched heart, it had a strange and startling effect.

"All the negresses, who had been working out their charms, rose, as though awakened from sleep. They had been unconscious of my presence. Now they rushed wildly at me, shouting, '*Blanco! Blanco!*' I have never seen a more varied assortment of horrible faces than were theirs in their anger, with their shining teeth and their white bloodshot eyes.

"They were ready to tear me to pieces. The old one with the heron plume waved her hand, and cried several times, '*Zoté cordé! Zoté cordé!*' (All together! All together!) The mad women then suddenly stopped, and to my surprise removed their feather aprons, threw them upon the ground, and began around me that indecent dance which the blacks call '*la chica*.' It expresses pleasure and gayety by its grotesque figures and quick movements, but in the present case, for various reasons, it assumed a sinister character. The *griotes* shot glances of hatred at me in the midst of their mad evolutions, the joyous air of the *chica* assumed an ominous tone, the venerable leader of the Sanhedrim brought out sharp and prolonged groans from her *balafo*, a sort of spinet, which sounds like a small organ, and which consists of twenty or more wooden pipes which gradually diminish in length and thickness. All this, and especially the laugh of each naked sorceress at certain figures in the dance, as she

came and almost laid her face against mine, showed me too well what frightful punishment awaited the *blanco* who had thus desecrated their *ouanga*. I remembered the custom of these savage peoples, who dance around the prisoners before massacring them; and I patiently suffered these women to carry on the ballet of the tragedy, the *dénouement* of which was to come with my blood. However, I could not restrain a groan, when, to the strains of the *balafo*, each *griote* put into the flames the point of a sword, or the blade of an axe, the end of a long needle, a pair of tongs, or the teeth of a saw.

"The end of the dance was approaching; the instruments of torture were red-hot. At a signal from the leader, the negresses went in single file, and removed some dread instrument from the fire.

"Those who had no instrument seized firebrands. Then I saw clearly what was in store for me, that each dancer was to be an executioner. At another signal from their *coryphée*, they began the final figure, groaning fearfully. I closed my eyes, so that I might no longer see the sport of these female devils, who, breathless with fury and fatigue, beat their heads with their flaming weapons, which gave out sharp clashings and showers of sparks. I grew frigid as I waited for the moment when I was to feel my flesh tortured, my bones crackle, my nerves contorting beneath the red-hot stabs of the tongs and saws, and a shiver ran through me from head to foot. The moment was a terrible one.

"Fortunately it did not last long. The *griotes* were reaching the end of the *chica*, when suddenly I heard in the distance the voice of the negro who had captured me. He ran to me, shouting, '*Que haceis, mujeres de demonio? Que haceis alli? Dexaïs mi prisoniero!*' ('What are you doing, you women-devils? what are you doing? Leave my prisoner alone!') I opened my eyes. Already it was daylight. The negro spoke fast, and with gestures of rage. The *griotes* stopped; but they seemed less moved by his gestures than

by the presence of a strange-looking person by whom the black was accompanied.

"This was a short, stout man, almost a dwarf, whose face was hidden by a white veil, which had in it three holes for the mouth and eyes, after the fashion of penitents. The veil fell over his neck and shoulders, leaving his shaggy breast visible, the color of which seemed to me to be that of a *griffe*, and on which was suspended, from a gold chain, a monstrance in old silver. He wore a huge dagger, the handle in the shape of a cross, suspended from a scarlet belt, which held up a green, yellow, and black striped skirt, edged with fringe which fell to his huge and shapeless feet. His arms were bare like his breast, and he carried a white baton; a chaplet of beads of *adrézarack* hung beside the dagger. On his head he wore a pointed cap, covered with bells, which I was not surprised to recognize as the *gorra* of Habibrah. Among the hieroglyphs with which this species of mitre was covered, I saw spots of blood. Probably it was the blood of the faithful clown. These traces of the murder seemed to me a further proof of his death, and roused in my heart fresh regret.

"When the *griotes* saw the heir of Habibrah's cap, they cried in chorus, 'The *obi!*' and fell on their knees. I guessed that this was the sorcerer of Biassou's army. '*Basta! Basta!*' said he, approaching, and in a hollow voice, '*dexaïs el prisoniero de Biassu!*' ('Enough! enough! leave Biassou's prisoner alone!') All the women rose hurriedly, threw aside their instruments of torture, put on their feather aprons, and at a sign from the *obi* scattered like a swarm of locusts.

"The *obi* stared at me; then he seemed to tremble. He stepped back, and waved his baton at the vanishing *griotes* as though he would recall them. But, after muttering the word '*maldicho*' ('accursed!') between his teeth, he whispered a few words to the negro, and went slowly away, his arms crossed upon his breast in an attitude of deep meditation.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"My guardian then told me that Biassou had asked to see me, and that I must be ready for an interview with this chief in one hour.

"It was, no doubt, the one hour left me in which to live. Meanwhile I looked at the rebel camp, that the daylight now permitted me to see in all its strange detail. At any other time I must have laughed at the foolish vanity of the blacks, who were almost all covered with military and priestly ornaments, the booty of their victims. The greater part of these were bloody rags. It was not an unusual thing to see a gorget around a neck, or an epaulet on a chasuble. No doubt, in order to become rested from the labors to which they had been accustomed all their lives, the negroes were enjoying an idleness unknown to our soldiers, even when in camp. Some were asleep in the sunshine, their heads near a glowing fire; others, with glances now dull, now angry, were singing a slow, monotonous air, sitting in groups at the door of their *ajoupas*, a sort of hut thatched with leaves from the banana and palm trees, and the conical shape of which resembles our tents. Their black or yellow wives, with the aid of the little negroes, were preparing their food. I watched them turning on their forks the Indian potatoes, bananas, sweet potatoes, pease, cocoa, maize, the southern cabbage called *tayo*, and other native fruits which were cooking along side of bits of pork, turtle, and dog, in the huge copper kettles which they had stolen from the huts of the planters. In the distance, *griots* and *griotes* were singing around huge fires; and the wind brought me snatches of their barbaric chants, mingled with the sound of the guitars and *balafos*. Some sentinels,

on the summit of the adjacent rocks, kept watch over the camp of General Biassou, the sole intrenchment of which, in case of attack, lay in the circular cordon of *cabrouets*, filled with booty and ammunition. These black sentinels stood on the sharp granite cliffs which covered the mountains. Occasionally they would turn toward one another, like weather-cocks on Gothic spires, and would shout out as loud as they could the cry which told that the camp was safe, '*Nada! Nada!*' ('Nothing! Nothing!')

"From time to time groups of curious negroes collected about me. They all looked at me in an unfriendly manner.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"At last a company of colored soldiers, stoutly armed, arrived. The black to whom I seemed to belong untied me from the tree, and gave me to the chief of the squad, receiving in exchange a large bag, which he immediately opened. It was full of piastres. The negro knelt upon the ground, and began to count them greedily, while the soldiers led me away. I looked with curiosity upon their uniform. They wore a coat of thick brown, red, and yellow cloth, cut in the Spanish fashion. A sort of Castilian *montera*, trimmed with a large red cockade (red is the color of the Spanish cockade), hid their woolly hair. Instead of a cartridge-box, they carried a sort of game-bag at their side. Their arms were a heavy gun, a sword, and a dagger. I have since learned that this uniform was that of Biassou's private guard.

"After picking our way among the irregular ranks of the *ajoupas*, which filled the camp, we came at last to the entrance of a cave, which nature had hollowed out at the foot of an immense wall of rock, the savanna of which was closed. A great curtain of stuff from Thibet, called *katchmir*, and which is noted not so much for its bright color as for its soft folds and varied designs, hung in front of the entrance. The cave was surrounded by double lines of soldiers, equipped like those who had escorted me. The chief of the squad exchanged the password with the two sentinels at the entrance, raised the katchmir curtain, which fell behind us, and we were within the cave.

"A brass lamp with five sockets was suspended by chains from the ceiling, and threw a vacillating light upon the damp walls of this windowless cavern. Between two lines of mulatto soldiers, I saw a colored man, sitting on an enormous

mahogany stump, which was partly covered by a rug of parrot feathers. The man belonged to the tribe of the *sacatras*, which is separated from the negroes by an almost imperceptible shade. His costume was ridiculous. A magnificent belt of spun silk, from which hung a cross of Saint Louis, held up his coarse blue linen trousers; a vest of white dimity, so short that it did not meet the belt, completed his costume. He wore gray boots, a round cap with a scarlet cockade, and epaulets, one of which was gold with the two silver stars of the field-marshal, the other was of yellow linen. Two brass stars, which looked like the rowels of spurs, had been attached to the latter to make it worthy of being next to its brilliant companion. These epaulets were held in place by gauze bands, and hung down on either side of the chief's breast. On the feather rug in front of him were a sword and some pistols heavily embossed.

"Behind him, silent and motionless, stood two children in slaves' garb, each holding a large fan of peacock feathers. These two slave boys were white. Two squares of crimson velvet, which looked as though they had once belonged to some *prie-dieu*, had been placed on either side of the mahogany trunk. The one on the right was occupied by the *obi* who had saved me from the fury of the *griotes*. He was sitting with his limbs crossed, holding his baton, as motionless as a porcelain idol in a Chinese pagoda. Only from behind the holes in his veil I saw two shining eyes, fixed constantly upon me.

"On either side of the chief were piles of flags, banners, and field-colors of every description, among which I recognized the white flag with the fleur-de-lis, the tricolored flag, and the flag of Spain. The others were fancy ensigns. There was a huge black standard among them. At the rear of the room, over the chief's head, another object attracted my attention. It was the portrait of the mulatto Ogé, who had been accused of rebellion, and had been killed on the rack the previous year, with his lieutenant, Jean-Baptiste Chavanne,

and twenty other blacks or half-breeds. In this portrait, Ogé, son of a butcher of the Cape, was represented, as he had been in the habit of having himself painted, in the uniform of a lieutenant-colonel, with the cross of Saint Louis, and the order of the Lion, which he had bought in Europe from the Prince of Limbourg.

"The chief *sacatra*, to whom I was introduced, was of medium height. His ignoble face showed a mixture of slyness and cruelty. He bade me approach, and watched me for some time in silence; then he began to chuckle like a hyena.

"'I am Biassou,' said he.

"I had expected the name; but I could not hear it thus spoken, with such a fiendish laugh, without an inward quiver. But my face remained calm and proud. I said nothing.

"'Well!' he continued in bad French, 'have you just been on the rack, that you cannot bend your back in the presence of Jean Biassou, the generalissimo of the conquering countries, and marshal of the armies of *su majestad catolica?*' (The policy of the chief rebel leaders was to pretend that they did equally as much for the King of France, the Revolution, and Spain.)

"I crossed my arms upon my breast, and watched him fixedly. He began to chuckle again. This was a constant habit of his.

"'Oh! oh! *me pareces hombre de buen corozon*' ('You seem a man of courage'). 'Well, listen to what I have to tell you. Are you Creole?'

"'No,' I replied, 'I am French.'

"My bold manner made him frown.

"He continued to chuckle, —

"'So much the better. I see by your uniform that you are an officer. How old are you?'

"'Twenty.'

"'When was your birthday?'

"At this question, which awakened many sad memories, I stood for a moment lost in thought.

"He repeated the question with asperity. I replied, —

"'The day on which your comrade, Léogri, was killed.'

"Anger contracted his features; he gave a prolonged chuckle, but finally restrained himself, and said, —

"'It is twenty-three days since Léogri died; Frenchman, you shall tell him this evening, from me, that you have lived twenty-four days longer than he. I wish to leave you another day in the world, in order that you may tell him what the freedom of his brothers is, as you have seen it in the headquarters of Jean Biassou, field-marshal, and what this generalissimo's authority is over the *people of the king*.'

"It was under this name that Jean-François, who had styled himself Grand-Admiral of France, and his comrade, Biassou, designated their companies of negroes and revolting mulattoes.

"He ordered me to be seated between two guards, in a corner of the cave, and signed to some negroes who were wrapped in the cloak of an aide-de-camp.

"'Let the drum-call be sounded, that all the army may assemble about our headquarters, in order that we may review it. And you, chaplain,' said he, turning to the *obi*, 'put on your priestly robes, and celebrate for us and our soldiers the holy mass.'

"The *obi* rose, bowed reverently before Biassou, and whispered a few words in his ear; but the chief interrupted him in a loud voice: —

"'You have no altar, you say, Señor cura? Is that surprising among the mountains? But what difference does it make? When has the *bon Giu* (Creole, for 'the good Lord') need of magnificent temples, of an altar covered with gold and lace? Gideon and Joshua worshipped him before stones; do as they did, *bon per* (Creole, for 'good father'); the *bon Giu* is satisfied if the hearts are warm. You have no altar! Well, can you not improvise one from this great case of sugar, which was stolen the day before yesterday by the people of the king from the settlement of Dubuisson?'

"Biassou's suggestion was promptly taken. In an instant the interior of the cave was in readiness for this parody on the divine mystery. A tabernacle was brought, and a holy vessel which had been stolen from the parish church of l'Acul, from the same church where my union with Marie had received God's blessing, and which had been followed so soon after by misery.

"The sugar case was arranged as an altar, and a white cloth was laid over it for an altar-cloth. However, this fact did not hinder us from seeing on the sides of the altar, '*Dubuisson and Co., Nantes!*'

"The sacred vessels were placed on the altar; and the *obi*, finding he had no cross, took his dagger, the horizontal guard of which was of this shape, and stood it in front of the tabernacle, between the chalice and the monstrance. Then, without removing his sorcerer's cap, he hastily threw on the gown which had been stolen from the priest of l'Acul, opened the prayer-book, from which had been read the service for my fatal marriage, and turning to Biassou, whose throne was not far from the altar, he made a profound bow, and announced that he was ready to begin.

"Immediately, at a sign from the chief, the curtains before the entrance were raised, and I saw the entire army of blacks before the cavern. Biassou removed his round cap, and knelt before the altar.

"'On your knees!' cried he in a loud voice.

"'On your knees!' repeated the chiefs of every battalion. A sound of tambourines was heard. The entire army fell upon its knees. I alone remained sitting, rebelling at the horrible profanation which was about to take place before my very eyes; but the two strong mulattoes who guarded me pulled the seat from under me, pushed me forward roughly, and I fell on my knees like the others, forced to render a pretended respect for this pretended religion.

"The *obi* officiated gravely. Biassou's two little white pages performed the duties of deacon and assistant.

"The army of rebels, still on their knees, took part in the service with the deepest reverence, following the example of their *generalissimo*. At the moment of the exaltation, the *obi*, raising in his hands the Consecrated Host, turned toward the army, crying in Creole jargon: '*Zoté coné bon Giu; ce li mo fe zoté voer. Blan touyé li, touyé blan yo toute!*' ('You know the good God; it is he that has made you see. The whites killed him; kill now the whites.')

After having partaken of the Holy Communion, Toussaint-l'Ouverture, in later years, was in the habit of using the same words. At these words, uttered in a loud voice, which I seemed to have heard somewhere, sometime, all the crowd gave a great shout; they rattled their arms; and it needed nothing less than Biassou's interference to prevent these dread sounds from tolling my last hour. I saw to what an excess of fierceness and cruelty men could be carried, to whom a dagger was a cross, and on whose minds every impression acted so promptly and so deeply.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"The ceremony over, the *obi* turned to Biassou with a respectful bow. Then the chief rose, and addressed me in French: —

"'We are accused of having no religion. You see that this is a calumny. We are good Catholics.'

"I could not tell whether he spoke ironically or sincerely. A moment after, he ordered a glass jar brought to him full of black maize. Into this he threw some white maize; then, raising the jar above his head, so that the whole army could see it, he exclaimed: —

"'Brothers, you are the black maize, your enemies, the whites, are the white maize.' He set down the jar; and when almost all the white maize had disappeared beneath the black, he cried, with an air of inspiration and triumph: '*Guette blan si la la!*' ('You see the position the whites hold!') The parable was taken up, and echoed along every cliff. Biassou continued, mingling his poor French with Creole and Spanish phrases: —

"'*El tiempo de la mansuetard es pasado* ('The time for weakness is passed'). We have been long enough like gentle sheep, to the wool of which the whites compare our hair; let us now be as fierce as the panthers and the jaguars from the country whence we came. Force alone can acquire right; all comes to the one who is brave and without pity. Saint Loup has two *fêtes* in the Gregorian calendar, the Pascal Lamb has but one! Is it not so, chaplain?'

"The *obi* nodded his head affirmatively.

"'They have come,' continued Biassou, 'they have come, enemies to the regeneration of humanity, these whites, these colonists, these planters, these traders, *verdaderos demonios*,

from the mouth of Alecto! *Son venidos con insolencia* ('they come insolently'); they are covered, these proud people, with arms, with plumes, and with clothes, magnificent to look upon, and they despise us because we are black and naked. They think, in their pride, that they can scatter us as easily as this fan of peacock feathers scatters the swarms of flies and mosquitoes!'

"He seized from the hands of a white slave one of the fans which he had carried behind him, and waved it over his head excitedly. Then he resumed: —

"'But, oh, my brothers! our army has swooped down upon theirs like insects on a corpse; they have fallen in their fine uniforms, beneath the blows from these bare arms which they thought were weak, not knowing that good wood is stronger when the bark is stripped off. They tremble now, these accursed tyrants! *Yo gagné peur!*' (Creole dialect, 'They are afraid!') A howl of joy and triumph answered the chief's cry, and the band repeated it, '*Yo gagné peur!*'

"'Blacks, Creoles, and Congos,' cried Biassou, 'revenge and liberty! Half-breeds, be not led away by *los diabolos blancos.* Your fathers belong to their ranks, but your mothers are in ours. For the rest, *O hermanos de mi alma* ('O brothers of my soul'), they have never treated you as fathers, but as masters; you were slaves like the blacks. While scarcely a wretched bit of cotton covered your limbs, which were burned with the sun, your cruel fathers strutted about in *buenos sombreros*, wearing nankeen vests on work-days, and on *fête*-days coats of barracan or velvet, *a diez y siete quartos la vara* ('at seventeen *quartos la vara*' — a Spanish measurement, equal to about an ell). Curse these unnatural creatures! But, as the holy commandments of the *bon Giu* forbid it, do not strike your father yourself. If you meet him in the enemies' ranks, however, who is there to hinder you, *amigos*, from saying to each other, '*Touyé papa moé ma touyé quena toué?*" ('Kill my father, and I will kill thine!') Mulattoes have been heard to utter these words, making terms, as it were, in regard to kill-

ing each other's fathers.) 'Vengeance, people of the king! Liberty for all!' This cry finds an echo on every island; it started from *Quisqueya* [The ancient name of Saint Domingo, meaning *Grande-Terre* ('great land'). The early settlers called it also *Aity*], it awakens in Tabago and Cuba. It was a chief of the one hundred and twenty-five yellow negroes from the Blue Mountain, it was a black from Jamaica, Bouckmann, who raised the flag among us. A victory was his first brotherly act toward the blacks of Saint Domingo. Let us follow his glorious example, torch in one hand, an axe in the other! No mercy for the whites, the planters! Let us massacre their families, let us devastate their plantations; let us leave on their estates not a tree with its roots underground. Let us overthrow the earth that it may swallow up the whites! Courage, then, friends and brothers! We shall soon fight and exterminate them. We shall triumph, or we shall die. Conquerors, we shall enjoy, in our turn, every blessing of life; dead, we shall join the saints in heaven, in paradise, where every brave man shall receive a double measure of *aguardiente* ('brandy'), and a bag of coins a day!'

"This soldierly sermon, which seems absurd to you, gentlemen, produced a wonderful effect on the rebels. It is true that there was a curious power and fascination in Biassou's weird pantomime, in the inspired accents of his voice, in the strange irony of his words. The art by which he flattered the passion or the interest of the rebels added strength to his eloquence, which he suited to his audience. I will not try to describe the sombre enthusiasm which prevailed in the army of the insurgents after Biassou's speech. There was a discordant mingling of cries, complaints, and groans. Some beat their breasts, others waved aloft their clubs and their swords. Several fell on their knees, and remained there in motionless ecstasy. Negresses tore their breasts and their arms with the fish-bones which they use as combs for their hair. The guitars, tamtams, tambourines, and *balafos* mingled their music with the discharge of the musketry. It was like a nocturnal meeting of witches,

"Biassou waved his hand; the tumult ceased as by magic, and every negro returned to his place in silence. This discipline, which Biassou exercised over his equals by the power of thought and will, filled me with admiration. Every soldier of the rebel army seemed to speak and move under the hand of its chief, as the keys of the harpsichord beneath the touch of a musician."

CHAPTER XXX.

"ANOTHER picture, another kind of charlatanism, then caught my attention: it was the dressing of the wounds. The *obi*, who fulfilled the two functions of minister of the soul and minister of the body, had begun his inspection of the patients. He laid aside his priestly ornaments, and had a great case brought to him filled with his drugs and instruments. He rarely used his surgical instruments, however; and with the exception of a lancet made from a fish-bone, with which he bled very cleverly, he struck me as being very awkward in his handling of the pincers which took the place of the forceps, and of the knife which he used as a bistoury. Most of the time he prescribed drinks of oranges found in the woods, China-root and sarsaparilla, and a few swallows of tafia. His favorite, and, as he thought, his best, remedy consisted of three glasses of red wine, with which he mixed grated nutmeg and the yolk of a hard-boiled egg. He used this for every kind of complaint. You can easily see that this medicine was as absurd as the religion which he preached; probably the small number of cases in which it was successful would not have sufficed to make the blacks have perfect confidence in the *obi*, had he not added the art of jugglery to his drugs, and sought to work as successfully on the imagination of the negroes as he failed to do in regard to their troubles. Thus, when he touched their wounds, he would make some mysterious signs; then, at other times, he would resort to various old superstitions which were mixed up with early Catholicism. He would place on their wound a small fetich stone, wrapped in lint; and the patient attributed to the stone the good effects of the lint. If he was told that one of his patients had died, he would reply, in a

solemn voice, that he was a traitor, that when such and such a settlement was burned, he had saved a white. His death was a punishment; and the crowd of open-mouthed rebels would clap their hands, filled more than ever with hatred and vengeance. Among others, the charlatan used one method of cure which struck me as very strange. It was in the case of one of the black chiefs, who had been dangerously wounded in the last combat. He made a long examination of the wound, dressed it as well as he could, and then, mounting the altar, 'All that amounts to nothing,' said he. Then he tore in two, three or four leaves of the prayer-book, burned them in the candles which had been stolen from the church at l'Acul, and mixing the burned paper with a few drops of wine which he had poured into the chalice, he handed it to the wounded chief: 'Drink,' said he, 'this will cure you.' (This remedy is still often used in Africa, especially among the Moors of Tripoli, who frequently throw into their beverages the cinders of a burned page from the book of Mahomet. This makes a philter to which they attribute sovereign virtues. Some English traveller calls this drink *an infusion of Alcoran.*) The chief drank, fixing his eyes upon the juggler, in perfect confidence. The latter raised his hands above him as though in benediction, and perhaps the feeling that he was cured helped to cure the chief!

CHAPTER XXXI.

"ANOTHER scene, in which the veiled *obi* was the chief actor, followed this. The physician had taken the place of the priest, the sorcerer now took the place of the physician.

"'*Hombres, escuchate!*' ('Men, listen;' the meaning which the Spaniards give to the word *hombre*, in this instance, cannot be translated; it is more than *man*, and less than *friend*) cried the *obi*, jumping with indescribable agility upon the improvised altar, where he sat with his legs crossed under his striped skirt; '*escuchate, hombres!* those of you who wish to read their future from the book of destiny, and I will tell it; *hé estudiado la ciencis de los gitanos*' ('I have studied the science of the Egyptians').

"A crowd of blacks and mulattoes surrounded him.

"'One at a time!' cried the *obi*, whose hollow voice sometimes assumed that sharp tone which sounded so familiar to me; 'if you all come at once, you will all die together.' They fell back. Just then a colored man, in a black jacket and white trousers, with a madras handkerchief on his head, after the fashion of the wealthy colonists, came up to Biassou. Consternation was written in every line of his face.

"'Well,' said the *generalissimo* in a low voice, 'what is it? What ails you, Rigaud?'

"It was the mulatto who commanded the troops from Cayes, since known under the name of *General Rigaud*, a deceitful man, but honest to all appearances, hiding his cruelty beneath a gentle manner. I looked at him attentively.

"'General,' replied Rigaud (he spoke very low, but I was near enough to hear), 'at the edge of the camp there is a messenger from Jean-François. Bouckmann has just been

killed in an encounter with Monsieur de Touzard; and the whites have hung up his head as a trophy."

"'Is that all?' asked Biassou, and his eyes sparkled with joy at the diminished number of the leaders. His importance, in consequence, was increased.

"'The messenger from Jean-François has other news for you.'

"'That is good,' returned Biassou; 'dispense with that woful countenance, my dear Rigaud.'

"'But,' objected Rigaud, 'do you not fear the effect of Bouckmann's death upon your army?'

"'You are not as simple as you seem, Rigaud,' replied the chief; 'you shall see what Biassou will do. Only detain the messenger outside for fifteen minutes.'

"Then he approached the *obi*, who, during this conversation which no one but myself had overheard, had begun his office of conjurer, asking questions of the astonished negroes, examining the lines of their foreheads and hands, giving them more or less good fortunes, according to the sound, color, and weight of the money which each one threw into a plated silver urn. Biassou whispered a few words in his ear. The sorcerer, without interrupting himself, went on with his operations.

"'This one,' said he, pointing to one with a small square figure or triangle in the middle of his forehead, 'means great wealth without trouble or labor.

"'Three *S*'s, no matter on what part of the forehead, is a very bad sign; if any one has them, he will surely be drowned, unless he avoids all water with the greatest care.

"'Four lines starting at the nose and curving two by two to the forehead above the eyes, mean that some day he will be a war-prisoner, and that he will groan as the captive of a stranger.'

"Here the *obi* struck an attitude.

"'Friend,' said he gravely, 'I have noticed this sign on the forehead of Bug-Jargal, the chief of the soldiers of the Morne Rouge.'

"These words, which again proved the capture of Bug-Jargal, were followed by lamentations from the entire company which was composed of blacks alone, and whose chiefs wore scarlet cockades. It was the company of the Morne Rouge.

The *obi* continued: —

"'If you have on the right side of your forehead, over the line of the moon, anything which resembles a fork, be careful not to live an idle life, or to seek too much pleasure.

"'A small but very important sign, the Arabian figure for the number 3, over the line of the sun, means a flogging' —

"An old negro, Spanish-Domingo, interrupted the sorcerer, begging him to bind up the wound which he had received on his forehead. One of his eyes, too, had been torn from its socket, and was hanging down covered with blood. The *obi* had forgotten him in his medical round. When he saw him, he cried out, —

"'Round figures on the right side of the forehead, over the line of the moon, mean some harm to the eyes. *Hombre,*' said he to the wretched man, 'this sign is very apparent on your forehead; let us see your hand.'

"'Alas! *excelentissimo señor,*' replied the other, '*mis' usted mi ojo!*' ('Alas! most excellent lord, see my eye!')

"'*Fatras,*' replied the *obi* jokingly, 'I have reason to see your eye! It is your hand I want!'

"The poor wretch showed his hand, murmuring again, '*Mi ojo!*'

"'Good!' exclaimed the sorcerer. 'If over the life-line there is a point surrounded by a small circle, it means that the person shall lose one eye. Here it is, here is the point and the small circle; you will be blind in one eye.'

"'*Ya le soy*' ('I know that already'), replied the fellow, with piteous groans.

"But the *obi,* who was not then a surgeon, pushed him roughly away, and continued without paying further heed to the poor man's moans: —

"'*Escuchate, hombres!* If the seven lines on the forehead are small, zigzag, faint, they mean a short life.

"'Two arrows crossed between the eyebrows on the line of the moon mean death in a battle.

"'If the life-line has a cross at the end, near the joint, it means death on the scaffold. And,' continued the *obi*, 'I must tell you, *hermanos*, that one of the bravest supporters of independence, Bouckmann, had these fatal marks.'

"At these words the negroes held their breath; their eyes were fixed immovably upon the juggler, and expressed an attention which was almost stupor.

"'Only,' added the *obi*, 'I cannot explain this double sign of Bouckmann's, which means both a battle and a scaffold. However, my art is infallible.'

"He stopped, and spoke to Biassou. The latter whispered a few words to one of his aides-de-camp, who left the cave without delay.

"'A gaping, drooping mouth,' resumed the *obi*, turning back to the audience, in his malicious, jeering tone, 'an insipid attitude, arms which hang down, with the left hand turned outside without one's knowing why, — all this means natural stupidity, ignorance, and dull curiosity.'

"Biassou chuckled. At that moment the aide-de-camp returned, leading a negro covered with dirt and dust, and whose feet, torn by the rocks and stones, showed that he had come a long distance. He was the messenger whom Rigaud had announced. He held in one hand a sealed packet, in the other an open parchment which bore a seal, stamped with a burning heart. In the centre was a monogram with the characteristic letters M and N intertwined to designate, no doubt, the union of the free mulattoes and the negro slaves. By the side of the monogram I read this scroll, 'Prejudice conquered, the rod of iron broken; long live the king!' This parchment was a passport sent by Jean-François.

"The messenger presented it to Biassou, and bowing to the ground, handed him the sealed packet. The *generalissimo*

opened it quickly, read the despatch, put it into the pocket of his jacket, and striking his hands together, cried in a disconsolate voice, —

"'People of the king!'

"The negroes bowed low.

"'People of the king! Hear what is sent to Jean Biassou, the *generalissimo* of the conquered countries, marshal of the field and of the armies of his Catholic Majesty, from Jean-François, grand admiral of France, lieutenant-general of the armies of his aforesaid Majesty, the King of the Spanish provinces and the Indies: —

"'Bouckmann, commander of one hundred and twenty blacks between the *Blue Mountain* and Jamaica, recognized as free by the Governor-General of Belle-Combe, has just died in the glorious fight for liberty and humanity against despotism and barbarity. This generous leader was killed in an encounter with the white brigands under the infamous Touzard. The wretches have cut off his head, and have announced that they will raise it shamefully on a scaffold on the place of arms in their city of the Cape. Vengeance!'

"The silence of despair fell upon the army. But the *obi* rose again upon the altar, and cried, waving his white baton triumphantly: —

"'Salomon, Zorobabel, Éléazar Thaleb, Cardan, Judas, Bowtharicht, Averroès, Albert the Great, Bohabdil, Jean de Hagen, Anna Baratro, Daniel Ogrumof, Rachel Flintz, Altornino! I thank you. The *ciencia* of the prophets has not failed me. *Hijos, amigos, hermanos, muchachos, mozos, madres, y, vosotros todas qui me escuchais aqui* ('Sons, friends, brothers, boys, children, mothers, all who hear me'), what did I predict? *que habia dicho?* The lines on Bouckmann's forehead said that he would not live long, that he would fall in a combat; the lines of his hand, that he would appear upon the scaffold. The revelations of my art are faithfully realized; and the events arrange themselves to bring about details to which we cannot reconcile ourselves, his death on

the battlefield, and the scaffold! Brothers, show your admiration!'

"The despair of the blacks changed to wondering amazement. They listened to the *obi* with a trust mingled with terror; he, perfectly satisfied with himself, walked up and down upon the box of sugar, the top of which was large enough for his feet to have plenty of room. Biassou chuckled, and spoke to the *obi.*

"'Chaplain, since you can read the future, it pleases us to ask what is to be our fortune, Jean Biassou's, *mariscal de campo.*'

"The *obi* stood proudly upon the altar, where the credulous blacks looked up to him as to a god, and said to the *mariscal de campo,* '*Venga vuestra merced!*' ('Approach, your grace!')

"At that moment the *obi* was the most important man in the whole army. The military power yielded before the priestly power. Biassou drew nearer. There was an angry light in his eyes.

"'Your hand, General,' said the *obi,* stooping to take it. '*Empezo* ('I begin'). The *line of the joint,* equally distinct in its entire length, means wealth and happiness. The *life-line,* long and distinct, means a life free from trouble, and a green old age; if straight, it means you have wisdom, ingenuity, generosity of heart; finally, I see in it what the *chiromancos* call the best sign of all, a cluster of little lines in the form of a branching tree, rising toward the upper part of the hand; this means wealth and greatness. *The health-line* is very long, and proves what the life-line says; it indicates courage also; curving to the little finger, it makes a sort of a hook, — General, this is the sign of wise severity.'

"At this word the brilliant eye of the little *obi* stared at me from behind the holes in his veil, and again I noticed a familiar tone hidden beneath his naturally hollow voice. Then he continued, with the same gestures and in the same tone: —

"'Filled with small circles, *the health-line* indicates many necessary executions which you should order. It is interrupted in the centre, and forms a half-circle, a sign that you will be exposed to great risks with wild beasts, that is, the whites, if you do not exterminate them. *The line of fortune*, surrounded, like the life-line, by smaller lines rising toward the upper part of the hand, indicates future power and supremacy, which you are to have; straight and faint in the upper part, it indicates talent for ruling. The fifth line, that of the *triangle*, extending to the middle finger, promises success in every undertaking. Now let me see the fingers. The thumb has small horizontal lines running from the nail to the joint; this means a great inheritance; Bouckmann's glory probably!' added the *obi* aloud. 'The high part which lies at the root of the index finger is full of small faint lines; they mean honor and laurels! The middle finger tells nothing; the ring finger is full of lines crossing one another; this means that you will conquer all your enemies, you will overthrow every rival! The lines forming crosses of Saint-André indicate genius and foresight! The joint where the little finger meets the hand is crossed by tortuous lines; fortune will heap favors upon you. I see the figure of a circle there too, which indicates that you will grant power and honors!

"'"Happy," says Éléazer Thaleb "is he who has all these signs! the future holds his prosperity, and his star will guide him to the genie who bestows glory." Now, General, let me see your forehead. "Any one," says Rachel Flintz, the gypsy, "who has in the middle of his forehead, over the line of the sun, a small square, or a triangle, will have a great fortune." Here is the figure, well marked. "If the line is on the right, it means an important succession." Still that of Bouckmann! "A horseshoe between the eyebrows, below the line of the moon, indicates that you will avenge yourself for injury and tyranny." I have this sign; you, too.'

"The way in which the *obi* pronounced the words, '*I have this sign*,' struck me again.

"'Then,' he added, in the same tone, 'the soldiers who plan a bold revolt and overthrow servitude have it. The lion's claw which you have above your eyebrow means brilliant courage. Finally, General Jean Biassou, your forehead shows the most strikingly prosperous lines; it has a combination of lines which form the letter M, the first in the name of the Virgin. No matter on what part of the forehead or on what line this figure appears, it indicates genius, glory, and power. The one who has it will always win, whatever cause he undertakes; those over whom he will be leader will never have cause to regret their loss; he alone will be worth all the defenders of his party. You are this one chosen by fate.'

"'*Gratias*, Chaplain,' said Biassou, starting to return to his mahogany throne.

"'Wait, General,' resumed the *obi;* 'I forgot one sign. The line of the sun, strongly marked on your forehead, indicates well-living, the desire to make people happy, great liberality, and a love of luxury.'

"Biassou seemed to think that the omission had been more on his part than on that of the *obi.* He drew from his pocket a well-filled purse, and threw it into the silver urn, that the *line of the sun* might speak true.

"However, the shining horoscope of the chief had a good effect upon the army. Every rebel, on whom the words of the *obi* produced a greater impression than ever after the news of Bouckmann's death had been announced, turned from despair to enthusiasm, and trusting blindly in their infallible sorcerer and their general, began to shout: 'Long live the *obi!* Long live Biassou!' The *obi* and Biassou looked at each other; and I thought that I heard the smothered laugh of the *obi,* and the chuckle of the *generalissimo.*

"I do not know why this *obi* troubled my mind; it seemed as though I had seen or heard some one who resembled the strange being; I wanted to hear him speak to me.

"'Master *obi, señor cura, doctor medico,* chaplain *bon Per!*' I called.

"He turned.

"'There is still some one whose horoscope you have not told; I mean myself.'

"He crossed his arms upon the silver sun which covered his shaggy breast, and did not reply. I said again, —

"'I should like to know what you think the future has in store for me; but your honest comrades have stolen my watch and my purse, and you are not a sorcerer to read fortunes *gratis*.'

"He came quickly toward me, and muttered in my ear, —

"'You are mistaken! Let me see your hand.' I raised it, watching him. His eyes shone, he seemed to be examining my hand.

"'If the life-line,' he said, 'is cut at the centre, by two small but strongly marked transverse lines, it is the sign of approaching death. Your death is at hand!

"'If the line of health is not in the middle of the hand, and if the life-line and the line of fortune form an angle at their starting-point, the death will not be a natural one. Do not expect a natural death!

"'If the lower part of the index finger is crossed by a line along its entire length, you will die a violent death!'

"There was something joyous in the hollow tones of the voice which announced my death; but I heard him with scorn and indifference.

"'Sorcerer,' said I, with a disdainful smile, 'you are clever, you foretell a sure thing.'

"He came nearer to me.

"'You doubt my art, do you? Well! listen. The breaking of the line of the sun on your forehead tells me that you mistake an enemy for a friend, and a friend for an enemy.'

"The words seemed to refer to that wretched Pierrot, whom I had loved and who had betrayed me, and to the faithful Habibrah, whom I hated, and whose bloody clothes had attested his brave and devoted death.

"'What do you mean?' I cried.

"'Listen to the end,' continued the *obi*. 'I have told you the future, this is the past; the line of the moon is slightly curved on your forehead, that means that your wife has been stolen from you.'

"I trembled; I strove to spring from my seat, but my guards held me back.

"'You are not patient,' resumed the sorcerer; 'listen to the end. The little cross which cuts the end of this curve completes the fortune. Your wife was stolen from you on the very night of your wedding.'

"'Wretch!' I cried, 'you know where she is! Who are you?'

"Again I strove to free myself, and to tear away his veil, but one must yield to numbers and strength; and it was with fury that I watched the mysterious *obi* leaving me.

"'Do you believe in me now?' he asked. 'Prepare yourself for immediate death!'

CHAPTER XXXII.

"My attention was turned for a moment from these perplexing thoughts by a tragedy which followed the absurd comedy just played before the astonished blacks.

"Biassou had taken his seat again upon the mahogany throne; the *obi* was on his right, Rigaud on his left, on the two scarlet squares. The *obi*, his arms crossed on his breast, seemed lost in deep meditation; Biassou and Rigaud were chewing tobacco; and an aide-de-camp had just asked the *mariscal de campo* if he wished to review the army, when three noisy groups of blacks arrived at the entrance of the cave, shouting furiously. Each group held a prisoner, whom they were bringing to Biassou, not so much for the sake of asking him for pardon, as to know his will regarding the punishment to be inflicted. Their ominous cries expressed only too well: 'Death! Death! *Muerte! Muerte!*'—'Death! Death!' some English negroes echoed, who no doubt belonged to Bouckmann's company, which had already come up to join the Spanish and French blacks belonging to Biassou.

"The *mariscal de campo* waved his hand for silence, and told the three captives to advance to the entrance of the cave. I was surprised to recognize two of them; one was the Citizen General C——, the philanthropic correspondent of every negrophile in the world, who had suggested such a cruel plan in the council, for the slaves. The other was the suspected planter who had shown such scorn for the mulattoes, one of whom the whites had considered him. The third appeared to belong to the class of the *petits blancs;* he wore a leather apron, and his sleeves were rolled up to his elbows. The three had been caught separately, as they were trying to hide among the mountains.

"The *petit blanc* was questioned first.

"'Who are you?' asked Biassou.

"'I am Jacques Belin, a carpenter in the Hospital of the Fathers, at the Cape.'

"Surprise mingled with shame shone in the eyes of the *generalissimo* of the conquered countries.

"'Jacques Belin!' exclaimed he, biting his lips.

"'Yes,' replied the carpenter; 'do you not remember me?'

"'Begin,' said the *mariscal de campo*, 'by recognizing me and bowing.'

"'I do not bow to my slave!' the carpenter answered.

"'Your slave! you wretch!' cried the *generalissimo*.

"'Yes,' replied the carpenter, 'yes, I was your first master. You pretend you do not know me; but, Jean Biassou, I sold you for thirteen piastres to a merchant from San Domingo.'

"The face of Biassou contracted with anger.

"The *petit blanc* continued, 'You seem ashamed at having served me! Should not Jean Biassou feel honored to have belonged to Jacques Belin? Your mother, the old fool, has often swept my house; but not long since I sold her to the major-domo of the Hospital of the Fathers. She is so decrepit that he would give me only thirty-two pounds for her, and six cents in change. But, nevertheless, this is your history and hers. It seems that you have become proud, you negroes and mulattoes, forgetting the time when you were slaves. "On your knees, Master Jacques Belin, the carpenter from the Cape," you say.'

"Biassou listened with the fierce chuckle which resembled a tiger's.

"'Well!' said he.

"Then, turning toward the negroes who had brought Master Belin, —

"'Get two wooden horses, two planks, and a saw, and take away this man. Jacques Belin, carpenter from the Cape, thank me, for I am going to give you a carpenter's death.'

"His laugh told of the horrible punishment which was to

lay low the pride of his former master. I shivered, but Jacques Belin did not move an eyelash; he turned proudly to Biassou.

"'Yes,' said he, 'I ought to thank you, for I sold you for thirteen piastres, and you certainly brought me more than you are worth.'

"They led him away.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"The two other prisoners had listened, more dead than alive, to what was the frightful prologue of their own tragedy. Their humble and scared attitude was a great contrast to the somewhat swaggering boldness of the carpenter; they shook in every limb.

"Biassou looked first at one, then at the other, with his sly glance; and, being pleased to prolong their agony, he engaged Rigaud in a conversation concerning the various kinds of tobacco, saying that the tobacco from Havana was not good to smoke in cigars, and that he knew no better Spanish tobacco than that of which the late Bouckmann had brought him two boxes, bought at Monsieur Lebattu's, the proprietor of the island of La Tortue. Then, turning suddenly to the Citizen-General C——:

"'What do you think about it?' he asked.

"The citizen started at the unexpected question, and answered tremblingly, —

"'I am of the same opinion, General, as your Excellency.'

"'Flattery!' answered Biassou. 'I ask for your advice, not mine. Do you know a better tobacco than Monsieur Lebattu's?'

"'No, indeed, my Lord,' replied C——, whose nervousness amused Biassou.

"'*General! Excellency! My Lord!*' repeated the chief impatiently; 'are you not an aristocrat?'

"'No, indeed!' cried the Citizen-General; 'I am a good patriot of '91, and a strong negrophile.'

"'*Negrophile!*' interrupted the *generalissimo;* 'what is a *negrophile?*'

"'A friend of the blacks,' muttered the citizen.

"'It is not enough to be a friend of the blacks,' answered Biassou severely; 'you must be a friend to the colored men too.'

"I think I have said that Biassou was a *sacatra*.

"'That is what I mean,' humbly replied the negrophile. 'I am in sympathy with all the best-known partisans of the negroes and mulattoes.'

"Biassou, happy at having humiliated a white, again interrupted him: '*Negroes and mulattoes!* What do you mean by that? Do you come here to insult us with these odious names, invented by the scorn of the whites? There are only colored men and blacks here. Do you understand, master colonist?'

"'It is a bad habit I learned in infancy,' replied C——. 'Pardon me, I did not mean to offend you, monseigneur.'

"'Stop calling me "*monseigneur;*" I tell you that I do not like these aristocratic habits.' C—— again excused himself, and began to stammer a new explanation.

"'If you knew me, Citizen'—

"'Citizen! For whom do you take me?' cried Biassou angrily; 'I detest this jargon of the Jacobins. Are you, by any chance, a Jacobin? Remember that you are addressing the *generalissimo* of the people of the king! *Citizen!* The insolent!'

"The poor negrophile had no idea how to address this man, who scorned equally the title of *monseigneur* and *citizen*, the terms of the aristocracy and of the patriots; he was nonplussed, and Biassou, whose anger was only feigned, was deriving a cruel enjoyment from his embarrassment.

"'Alas!' cried the Citizen-General at last, 'you judge me wrongly, noble Defender-of-the-unprescribed-rights-of-the-half-of-the-human-race.'

"In his desire to give some title to the chief who refused all, he resorted to one of the well-sounding paraphrases which the revolutionists willingly substitute for the name and title of the person addressed.

"Biasssou looked fixedly at him, and said, —

"'So you like the blacks and half-breeds?'

"'Like them!' cried the Citizen C——, 'I correspond with Brissot and'—

"Biassou interrupted him with a chuckle:—

"'Ah! ah! I am delighted to find in you a friend of our cause. In this case, you probably detest the wretched colonists who punished our first insurrection by the most frightful acts of cruelty; you probably agree with us that it is not the blacks, but the whites, who are the real rebels, since they are revolting against nature and humanity; you probably hate these monsters.'

"'I do!' cried C——.

"'Well,' continued Biassou, 'what would you think of a man who, in order to put an end to the final attempts of the slaves, would have planted the heads of fifty blacks on both sides of the avenue to his home?'"

"The pallor of C——'s face grew alarming.

"'What would you think of a white who would suggest surrounding the city of the Cape by a cordon of the heads of slaves?'

"'Pity, pity!' cried the Citizen-General, terrified.

"'Have I threatened you?' coldly asked Biassou. 'Let me finish — by a cordon of heads, about the city, from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol? What would you think of that, hey? Tell me!'

"The words, '*Have I threatened you?*' brought back some hope to C——; he thought perhaps the chief knew these horrors, but not the originator of them, and he replied with some firmness, in order to prevent all idea of his having done it,—

"'I think that they are atrocious crimes.'

"Biassou chuckled.

"'Good! and how would you punish the one who suggested them?' The wretched C—— hesitated.

"'Well,' cried Biassou, 'are you a friend of the blacks, or not?'

"Of the two alternatives, the negrophile chose the least alarming; and, seeing nothing to fear for himself in Biassou's eyes, he said in a weak voice, —

"'He deserves death.'

"'Certainly,' calmly replied Biassou, spitting out the tobacco he had been chewing. His indifferent manner brought back some assurance to the poor negrophile, who made an effort to throw off every suspicion which might cling to him.

"'No one,' he cried, 'has promised more than I to aid your cause. I correspond with Brissot, and Pruneau de Pomme-Gouge, in France; Magaw, in America; Peter Paulus, in Holland; the Abbé Tamburini, in Italy' —

"He continued calmly to ennumerate the philanthropic list which he had given under other circumstances and in another cause, at Monsieur de Blanchelandes. Finally Biassou interrupted him.

"'Well, of what use to me is all this? Tell me merely where are your magazines, your depots; my army needs ammunition. No doubt your plantations are rich, your business should be good, since you correspond with every merchant on earth.'

"The Citizen C—— ventured a timid observation.

"'Hero of humanity, these are not merchants, these are philosophers, philanthropists, negrophiles.'

"'Well,' said Biassou, shaking his head, 'there he goes again, with his strange, devilish expressions. If you have neither depots or magazines to rob, of what use are you?'

"The question offered a ray of hope, which C—— seized upon greedily.

"'Illustrious warrior,' he replied, 'have you an economist in your army?'

"'What may that be?' demanded the chief.

"The prisoner answered with as much boldness as his terror permitted: 'It is a necessary man, *par excellence*, one who alone can appreciate, according to their respective worth,

the material resources of an empire; who considers them in the order of their importance, classes them according to their value, helps and improves them by combining them, and distributes them accordingly, like so many river-feeders in the great stream of general utility, which in turn enlarges the sea of public prosperity.'

"'Caramba!' exclaimed Biassou, leaning over toward the *obi*. 'What does the devil mean, with one word running into the other like the beads of your chaplet?'

"The *obi* shrugged his shoulders, in ignorance and disdain. But the Citizen C—— continued: —

"'I have studied, deign to hear me, O valiant chief of the brave regenerators of San Domingo, — I have studied the great economists, Turgot, Raynal, and Mirabeau, the friend of mankind. I have put their theories into practice. I know the science indispensable to the government of every kingdom and every state.'

"'The economist does not economize in words!' said Rigaud, with his soft, sneering smile. Biassou cried out, —

"'Tell me, prattler, have I kingdoms and states to govern?'

"'Not yet, great man,' replied C——, 'but they will come; besides, my art touches upon the details needful for the managing of an army.'

"The *generalissimo* again interrupted him.

"'I do not *manage* my army, master planter, I command it.'

"'Better yet,' observed the citizen; 'you shall be the general; I, the commissary. I have special receipts for the multiplication of animals.'

"'Do you think that we raise beasts?' asked Biassou, with a chuckle, 'we eat them. When the beasts in the French colony give out, I shall cross the mountains of the frontier, and shall steal the cows and sheep raised in the huts in the great plains of the Cotuy, la Vega, and Sant-Jago, and along the banks of the Yuna; I shall go, if necessary, even to the island of Samana, and beyond the mountain of Cibos, from

the mouth of the Neybe, even beyond San Domingo. Moreover, I shall take delight in punishing these d—— Spanish planters; it is they who freed Ogé! You see that I am not troubled for want of food, and that I do not need your art, "*necessary, par excellence.*"'

"This strong speech disconcerted the poor economist; but he tried another anchor for safety.

"'My studies are not limited to the breeding of beasts. I have other special receipts which may be useful to you. I can tell you how to discover child's clout and charcoal mines.'

"'Of what use are they?' asked Biassou. 'When I need charcoal, I burn three leagues of forest-wood.'

"'I can tell you of what use is each kind of wood,' continued the prisoner; 'chicory and *sabiecca* for the keels of ships; yabas for the knees; medlar-trees for the timbers; *hacomas, gaïacs, cedars, accomas*' —

"'*Que te lleven lodos los demonios de tos diez-y-siete infiernos!*' ('Go to the demons of the seventeen hells!') cried Biassou, impatient.

"'What is your wish, my gracious patron?' asked the economist tremblingly, who had not caught the Spanish words.

"'Listen to me,' said Biassou, 'I have no need of ships. There is only one position vacant; it is not the *mayor-domo's*, but the serving-man's. Think, *señor filosofo*, would it suit you? You would serve me on bended knee; you would bring me my pipe, my ragout, and turtle soup; and you would stand behind me with a fan of peacock or parrot feathers, like these two pages. Hum! answer me, should you like to be my valet?'

"Citizen C——, thinking only of his life, bowed to the ground with a thousand gestures of joy and gratitude.

"'You are willing to accept it, then?' asked Biassou.

"'Can you think, my generous master, that I would hesitate an instant at doing so small a favor as serving you?'

"At these words Biassou's diabolical chuckle became greater than ever. He crossed his arms, rose with an air of

triumph, and pushing aside the head of the white, who was kneeling before him, he cried aloud : —

" I am glad to have found out how great is the cowardice of the whites, after having known how great is their cruelty ! Citizen C——, I owe this double knowledge to you. I recognized you ! How could you be stupid enough not to see it ? It was you who had charge of the punishments in June, July, and August ; it was you who planted the heads of fifty blacks on both sides of your avenue, instead of palm-trees ; it was you who wanted to kill the five hundred negroes who were prisoners after the revolt, and to surround the town of the Cape with negroes' heads, from Fort Picolet to Cape Caracol. You would have taken my head, as a trophy, had you been able to do so ; and now you would think yourself fortunate if I were to let you be my valet. No, no ! I am more careful of your honor than are you yourself ; I will not insult you thus. Prepare to die.'

" He waved his hand ; and the blacks laid near me the wretched negrophile, who, without a word, had fallen to the ground as though struck by lightning.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"'Your turn now,' said the chief, turning to the last prisoner, the colonist suspected by the whites of being a half-breed, and who had challenged me for the insult. His answer was lost in the confusion.

"The rebels raised a general cry of '*Muerte! Muerte! Mort!* Death! *Touyé! Touyé!*' and ground their teeth, shaking their fists at the unfortunate captive.

"'General,' said a mulatto who expressed himself more clearly than the others, 'he is a white; he must die!'

"The poor planter, by shouts and gesticulations, at last succeeded in making himself heard.

"'No, no! General; no, my brothers, I am not a white! It is an abominable slander! I am a mulatto, a half-breed like you, son of a negress like your mothers and sisters!'

"'He lies!' cried the negroes, furious. 'He is a white. He has always hated the blacks and the colored men'—

"'Never!' retorted the prisoner. 'They are whites whom I hate. I am one of your brothers. I have always said with you, "*Nègre cé blan, blan cé nègre!*"' (A popular saying among the rebel negroes, of which the following is the literal translation, 'The negroes are the whites, the whites are the negroes.' The sense will be the better understood by this translation, '*The negroes are the masters; the whites are the slaves.*')

"'No, no!' cried all; '*touyé blan, touyé blan!*' ('Kill the white, kill the white!')

"The wretched man groaned in misery, repeating the words, —

"'I am a mulatto! I am one of your own people.'

"'What proof have you?' asked Biassou coldly.

"'The proof,' replied the other confused, 'is that the whites have always scorned me.'

"'Perhaps that is true,' replied Biassou, 'but you are an impudent fellow.'

"A young half-breed spoke to the colonist, —

"'The whites despise you, and it is right that they should; but, on the other hand, you pretend to despise the half-breeds, among whom they place you. I have even heard that you had a duel with a white who once had reproached you for belonging to our class.'

"A murmur rose from the indignant crowd, and shouts of death, more violent than ever, drowned the colonist's explanation. He glanced at me in despair, and burst into tears.

"'It is a slander! I have no other glory, no other honor, than to belong to the blacks. I am a mulatto.'

"'If you are really a mulatto,' observed Rigaud calmly, 'you would not use that term.' (It must be remembered that the colored men scornfully rejected this word, invented, they say, by the scorn of the whites.)

"'Alas! do I know what I am saying?' asked the poor fellow. 'General, the proof of my being a half-breed is this black circle which you see around my nails.' (Many half-breeds do have this sign, which in time wears off, but which re-appears again in their children.)

"Biassou thrust aside his hand.

"'I have not the art of the chaplain, who tells what you are from looking at your hand. But listen to me; our soldiers accuse you, some of being white, others of being false. If this is true, you must die. You declare that you belong to our class and that you have never denied us. There is one way for you to prove this, and thus save yourself.'

"'What is it, General, what?' asked the colonist eagerly. 'I am ready.'

"'This,' said Biassou coldly. 'Take this dagger, and stab these two white prisoners.'

"As he spoke, he pointed to us. The colonist recoiled in

horror at sight of the stiletto which Biassou had handed out to him with an infernal smile.

"'Well,' said the chief, "you hesitate? That, however, is the only way of proving to me, as well as to my army, that you are not a white, but one of us. Come, decide. We lose time.'

"The eyes of the prisoner stood out from their sockets. He stepped toward the dagger, then dropped his arm and stopped, shaking his head. A shiver ran through his body.

"'Come!' said Biassou, in anger and impatience, 'I am in haste. Choose, either you will kill them, or you will die with them.'

"The colonist stood petrified.

"'Very good!' said Biassou, turning to the negroes; 'he does not wish to be the executioner, he will be the victim. I see that he is a white; take him away.'

"The blacks advanced to seize him.

"This decided him between giving death or receiving it. Extreme cowardice has its courage. He rushed at the dagger which Biassou held out; and without stopping an instant to think what he was doing, he threw himself like a tiger upon the Citizen C——, who was lying by my side. Then began a horrible struggle. The negrophile, whom the result of Biassou's cross-examination had plunged into a dull, stupid despair, had seen what had been going on between the half-breed and the chief, but he had been so absorbed by thoughts of his coming tortures, that he had not wholly understood what had been happening; but when he saw the colonist spring upon him, and the steel shine above his head, his imminent danger recalled him in an instant. He sprang up, grasping the murderer's arm, and crying out pitifully, —

"'Pity! pity! What would you do to me? What have I done?'

"'You must die, sir,' replied the other, striving to disengage his arm, and glaring at his victim with wild eyes. 'Let me alone, I will not hurt you.'

"'Die at your hand?' cried the economist, 'but why? Spare me! You are angry, perhaps, at what I once said about your being a half-breed? But let me live, I swear I will call you a white. Yes, you are a white. I will noise it abroad, but mercy!'

"The negrophile had chosen a poor means of defence.

"'Silence, silence!' cried the half-breed, infuriated, fearing that the negroes would hear the words.

"But the other shouted, without listening to him, that he knew he was a white and of good family. The half-breed made a last effort to silence him, slipped quickly from him, and drove the dagger through the citizen's clothes. The wretch felt the point of steel, and bit with rage into the arm which drove it.

"'Monster! murderer! you would kill me!'

"He looked toward Biassou.

"'Defend me, Avenger of Humanity!'

"But the murderer leaned heavily on the dagger, a wave of blood spurted over his hand and across his face, and suddenly the knees of the unfortunate negrophile gave way, his arms fell, his eyes closed, his lips gave a muffled groan. He was dead.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"This tragedy, in which I expected soon to take part, had frozen me with horror. The *Avenger of Humanity* had watched the struggle of his two victims with an unfaltering eye. When it was over, he turned toward the frightened pages.

"'Bring me some more tobacco,' said he; and he calmly resumed his chewing. The *obi* and Rigaud were immovable, and the negroes themselves seemed frightened at the horrible scene which had just taken place.

"But one more white still remained to be killed, — I. My time had come. I glanced at the assassin who was to be my executioner, and I was indeed sorry for him. His lips were purple, his teeth chattered, he swayed back and forth, his hand returning mechanically to his forehead to wipe off the traces of blood, as he watched the reeking corpse stretched at his feet. His haggard eyes never left his victim.

"I was waiting for the moment when he would complete his task by killing me. I occupied a strange position with this man; he had already failed to kill me to prove that he was white; he was now going to assassinate me to show that he was a mulatto.

"'Well,' said Biassou, 'that was good. I am satisfied with you, friend!' He glanced at me, and added: 'I will spare you the other. Go. We will pronounce you a good brother, and we will appoint you executioner of our army.'

"Just then a negro stepped from the ranks, bowing three times before Biassou, and crying out in his jargon, which I will translate that you may the more easily understand it, —

"'And I, General?'

"'You! What do you mean?' asked Biassou.

"'Are you going to do nothing for me, General?' asked the negro. 'You grant promotion to that dog of a white, who assassinates, and is recognized as one of us. Will you not do something for me, too, who am a good black?'

"This unexpected request seemed to confuse Biassou; he leaned toward Rigaud, and the commander of the army of the Cayes answered him in French,—

"'We cannot satisfy him. Try to evade his request.'

"'Promote you?' then said Biassou, to the *good black;* 'I would ask for nothing better. What position do you want?'

"'I want to be an officer.'

"'An officer!' repeated the *generalissimo;* "well, what are your reasons for my giving you epaulets?'

"'It was I,' replied the black, with emphasis, 'it was I who set fire to the settlement of Lagoscette, in the early days of August. It was I who killed Monsieur Clement, the planter, and carried the head of the refiner on the point of a sword. I massacred ten white women and seven little children; one of them had even served as ensign for the brave blacks of Bouckmann. Later, I burned the families of four colonists in a room at Fort Galifet, which I bolted before burning. My father was killed on the rack at the Cape. My brother was hanged at Rocrou, and I myself just escaped being shot. I burned three coffee plantations, six indigo, and two hundred squares of sugar-cane. I killed my master, Monsier Noë, and his mother'—

"'Spare us your various services,' said Rigaud, whose pretended gentleness hid a real cruelty, but who was ferocious within bounds, and could not suffer the cynicism of brigandism.

"'I could tell you of many others,' replied the negro proudly; 'but probably you think that these are enough to give me the rank of *officer,* and for me to wear a gold epaulet on my coat, like our comrades over there.'

"'He pointed to the aides-de-camp, and the staff-officer of Biassou. The *generalissimo* seemed to consider for a moment, then he turned gravely to the negro:—

"'I should be glad to give you a rank; I am satisfied with your services, but one other thing is necessary. Do you know Latin?'

"The astonished brigand opened wide his eyes, and said, —

"'I did not understand, General.'

"'Well,' repeated Biassou quickly, 'do you know Latin?'

"'Latin?' asked the stupefied black.

"'Yes, yes, yes, Latin! Do you know Latin?' continued the deceitful chief. Pointing to a standard on which was written the verse of the psalm, '*In exitu Israël de Ægypto*,' he added, —

"'Tell us the meaning of those words.'

"The black, utterly amazed, remained mute and motionless, mechanically rubbing his hand against his trousers, while his frightened eyes went from the general to the flag, and back again.

"'Come, answer,' said Biassou impatiently.

"The black scratched his head, opened and shut his lips several times, and finally these words escaped him, —

"'I do not know what the General means.'

"Biassou's face suddenly assumed an expression of anger and indignation.

"'How is this, you miserable fool?' he cried. 'What! you would be an officer, and you do not know Latin!'

"'But, our General' — stammered the negro, trembling and embarrassed.

"'Silence!' replied Biassou, whose anger seemed increasing. 'I do not know why I do not have you shot at once for your presumption. Do you see, Rigaud, this pretty officer, who knows no Latin? Well, stupid, since you do not understand what is written on this flag, I will explain it to you. "*In exitu*," every soldier, "*Israël*" who does not know Latin, "*de Ægypto*," cannot be appointed officer. It is that, is it not, chaplain?'

"The little *obi* nodded affirmatively. Biassou continued, —

"'This brother whom I have just appointed executioner of the army, and of whom you are jealous, knows Latin.'

"He turned to the newly elected executioner.

"'Is it not so, friend? Prove that you know more of it than he does. What does "*Dominus vobiscum*" mean?'

"The wretched half-breed, arrested in his sad thoughts by this terrible voice, raised his head, and although his mind was still in a state of confusion on account of the cowardly deed he had just committed, terror forced him into obedience. There was something strange in the way the man strove to recall a bit of his college learning, in the midst of his thoughts of fright and remorse, and in the manner in which he uttered the childish explanation: '"*Dominus vobiscum*" means, "May the Lord be with you!"'

"'"*Et cum spiritu tuo!*"' solemnly added the mysterious *obi.*

"'"*Amen,*"' said Biassou. Then, resuming his impatient tone, and inserting into his feigned anger some phrases of poor Latin, in the fashion of Sgnanarelle, to convince the blacks of his knowledge: 'Return to the last rank!' he cried to the ambitious negro. '*Sursum corda!* In future, do not try to rise to the rank of your chiefs who know Latin, *orate, frates,* or I shall have you hung! *Bonus, bona, bonum!*'

"The negro, terrified and astonished, returned to the ranks, hanging his head in shame at the shouts of his comrades, who had been indignant at his poorly founded aspirations, and who were looking with admiration on their learned general.

"The scene had its burlesque side, which, however, inspired me with a high idea of Biassou's cleverness. The absurd method which he had used with such success, in order to disconcert the ambition, which is always so exacting among rebels, showed me at once the stupidity of the negroes and the tact of their chief. (Toussaint-l'Ouverture used the same method, afterwards, with equal success.)

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"The hour had come for Biassou's *almuerzo* (breakfast). They placed before the *mariscal de campo de su magestad catolica* a large turtle-shell, in which smoked a kind of *olla podrida*, richly seasoned with lard, and in which the flesh of the turtle took the place of lamb (*carnero*), and the sweet potato, the *garganzas* (chick-pease). A huge Caribbean cabbage floated on the surface of this *puchero*. On either side of the turtle-shell, which served both as a saucepan and a soup-tureen, were two cups of cocoa bark full of dried raisins, of *sandias* (watermelons), yams, and figs; it was the *postre* (dessert). Wheat bread and a leather bottle of tar-wine completed the *menu*. Biassou drew from his pocket some cloves of garlic, and rubbed the bread with them; then, without having the corpse which was still quivering before him removed, he began to eat, and asked Rigaud to join him. Biassou's appetite was something astonishing.

"The *obi* did not share their meal. I saw that, like others of his profession, he never ate in public, wishing the negroes to think that he was supernatural, and able to live without food.

"As he breakfasted, Biassou ordered an aide-de-camp to commence the review, and the soldiers began to line up before the cave. The blacks of Morne-Rouge marched first; they were about four thousand in number, divided into small, close companies, commanded by chiefs wearing trousers and scarlet belts, as I have before described. These blacks were almost all large and strong, and carried guns, axes, and swords. Many of them had bows, arrows, and assegais (African javelins) which they had made, not having other arms. They had no flag, and marched in silence, in a dazed sort of way.

"As they passed, Biassou leaned toward Rigaud, and said in French: 'When will the grape-shot of Blanchelande and de Rouvray rid me of these bandits of Morne-Rouge? I hate them; they are almost all Congos! And then, they do not know how to kill outside of battle; they follow the example of their imbecile leader, their idol, Bug-Jargal, the young fool, who aims to be generous and magnanimous. Do you know him, Rigaud? Well, I hope you never will. The whites have captured him, and they will rid me of him as they did of Bouckmann.'

"'Speaking of Bouckmann,' said Rigaud, 'those are the yellow negroes of Macaya who are passing, and I see among them the messenger sent by Jean-François to tell you of Bouckmann's death. Do you know that this fellow could destroy the effect of all the *obi's* prophecies regarding the death of this chief if he told that he was detained for half an hour at the outposts, and that he gave me his tidings before you had him brought here?'

"'*Diabolo!*' exclaimed Biassou, 'you are right, my dear fellow; the man's mouth must be closed. Halt!'

"Then, raising his voice, he cried, —

"'Macaya!'

"The commander of the yellow negroes approached, and presented his blunderbuss unloaded, out of respect to his chief.

"Biassou continued: 'Remove from your ranks that black over there, who should not be with you.'

"It was Jean-François' messenger. Macaya led him to the *generalissimo*, whose face immediately assumed the angry expression he knew so well how to feign.

"'Who are you?' he asked of the frightened negro.

"'Our General, I am a black.'

"'*Caramba!* I can easily see that. But what is your name?'

"'My nickname is Vavelan; my blessed patron is Saint Sabas, deacon and martyr, whose festival comes twenty days before Christmas.'

"Biassou interrupted him.

"'How dare you march in a parade in the midst of these shining Spaniards and white shoulder-belts with your unsheathed sword, your torn trousers, and your feet covered with mud?'

"'Our General,' the black answered, 'it is not my fault. I was ordered by the great admiral, Jean-François, to bring you the news of the death of Bouckmann, the chief of the yellow English soldiers; and if my clothes are torn and my feet muddy, it is from having run until I was out of breath to reach you as soon as possible, but I was detained in the camp, and'—

"Biassou scowled.

"'No matter about that, *gavacho!* I am talking about your audacity in taking part in the parade, when you are so untidy looking. Commit your soul to Saint Sabas, deacon and martyr, your patron, and go and be shot.'

"Here, again, I saw another proof of Biassou's moral power over the rebels. The unfortunate fellow, thus ordered to have himself shot, did not utter a word; he lowered his head, crossed his arms on his breast, bowed three times before his merciless judge, and after kneeling before the *obi*, who gave him an abridged absolution, he left the cave. A few moments after a gun shot told Biassou that the negro had obeyed him, and had begun to live.

"The chief, no longer anxious, turned to Rigaud, his eyes sparkling with pleasure, and gave a chuckle of triumph which seemed to say, 'Admire me!'[1]

[1] Toussaint-l'Ouverture, who was a pupil in Biassou's school, and who, although no more skilful, was at least far from equalling him in perfidy and cruelty, showed the same power over negro fanatics. This chief, sprung, they say, from a royal African race, had, like Biassou, a rough education, to which he added genius. He had erected a sort of republican throne at San Domingo at the time when Bonaparte was establishing in France a monarchy upon his victories. Toussaint felt a naïve admiration for the First Consul; but the latter considered him only a troublesome parody of his fortunes, and always scorned corresponding with the free slave who dared to write: "*To the first among the whites, from the first among the blacks.*"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"The review continued. The army, whose disorder a few hours previous had been such a strange sight, was no less peculiar on parade. There were negroes completely naked, carrying clubs, tomahawks, and axes, marching like savages to the music of the goat-horn; companies of mulattoes, in Spanish or English uniforms, well-armed, well-disciplined, keeping time to tambourines; crowds of negresses, little negroes, laden with pitchforks and spits; fellows bending beneath their heavy guns, without cock or barrel; *griotes* with their varied decorations; *griots* grinning and twisting about frightfully, and shouting incoherent airs to the guitar, the tamtam, and the *balafo*. This strange processsion from time to time was interspersed with mixed detachments of *griffes*, *marabouts*, *sacatras*, *mameloues*, *quarterons*, free half-breeds, and wandering crowds of yellow blacks, who marched proudly with shining carbines and loaded cabrouets, or a gun stolen from the whites, which was less of an arm than a trophy for them, shouting the battle-hymns of the camp of Grand-Pré and Oua-Nassé. Above the sea of heads, floated flags of every color and design, — white, red, tricolored, *fleur-de-lis*, — with the liberty-cap and the words, 'Death to priests and aristocrats! *Long live religion!* Liberty! Equality! Long live the King! Down with the metropolis! Long live Spain! No more tyrants!' etc. It was all a frightful confusion, which showed that the rebel force was only a mass of means without end, and that in this army there was no less disorder among the ideas than among the men.

"As they passed before the cave, the soldiers lowered their flags, and Biassou saluted them. To each company he spoke a word of praise or censure, which was received with a fanatical respect and a sort of superstitious fear.

"Finally the wave of barbarians and savages passed. The crowd of brigands, which at first had interested me, began to grow wearisome. Daylight was fading; and as the last line passed, the sun threw one dying crimson ray upon the granite front of the mountains of the east.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Biassou grew pensive. When the review was over, after his last orders had been given, and the rebels had returned to their *ajoupas*, he spoke to me: —

"'Young man, you may judge at your ease of my genius and power. The time has come when you must give an account of it to Léogri.'

"'It is not my fault that it has not come sooner,' I coldly replied.

"'That is true,' replied Biassou. He paused an instant as though to note the effect of what he was about to say: 'But it is your fault if it comes now.'

"'What do you mean?' I cried, astonished.

"'Yes,' continued Biassou, 'your life depends on yourself; you can save it if you wish.'

"This act of clemency, probably Biassou's first and last, was a great surprise to me. The *obi* too, as amazed as I, slipped down from the seat he had so long been occupying, in an attitude of ecstasy, like Hindoo fakirs. Confronting the general, he exclaimed angrily: —

"'*Que dice el exelentissimo señor mariscal de campo?* ('What does the most excellent field-marshal say?') Does he remember his promise? Neither he nor the *bon Giu* can now dispose of this man's life; it belongs to me.'

"Again, at the sound of his angry voice, it seemed to me that I knew the wretched little fellow; but the moment passed, and no remembrance of who he was came to me.

"Biassou rose calmly, spoke to the *obi* aside, pointed to the black flag to which I have referred, and after a moment or two the sorcerer nodded his head, as though consenting. Then they both resumed their places.

"'Listen to me,' then said the *generalissimo*, taking from his coat-pocket the other despatch from Jean-François; 'we are in trouble; Bouckmann has just perished in a combat. The whites have killed two thousand rebels in the district of Cul-de-Sac. The colonists are continuing to strengthen themselves by erecting military posts on the plain. Through our own fault we have lost the opportunity of taking the Cape; so good a chance will not occur soon again. On the east shore, the principal road is obstructed by a river; the whites, in order to defend it, have placed a battery on some bridges of boats, and have pitched two small camps on each shore. To the south there is a wide road across the mountains, called the *Haut-du-Cap;* they have covered this with soldiers and cannon. The position is equally fortified on the landside by a stockade at which all the inhabitants have worked, and they have added *chevaux-de-frise.* The Cape is under cover of our arms. Our ambuscade at the passes of Dompte-Mulâtre has failed. To all this is added the fever of Siam, which depopulates the camp of Jean-François. On this account the grand-admiral of France [we have already said that Jean-François assumed this title] is of the opinion, and we share it, that it would be well to make a treaty with Governor Blanchelande and the Colonial Assembly. Here is the letter that we are to send to the Assembly on this subject; listen:—

"'To the Deputies:

Great troubles have come upon this rich and important colony; we have been hemmed in, and nothing more remains for us to say in our own justification. Some day you will grant us our just dues. We ought to be included in the general amnesty which King Louis XVI. has pronounced for all alike.

Accordingly, as the King of Spain is a good king, and treats us well, and *shows his appreciation*, we shall continue to serve him zealously and devotedly.

We see by the law of Sept. 28, 1791, that the National Assembly and the king allow you to pronounce definitely upon the condition of the slaves, and the political condition of the colored race. We shall uphold the decrees of the National Assembly and yours, clothed in the required formalities, to our last drop of blood. It would even be inter-

esting for you to *declare*, by an official resolution of the general, that your intention is to look after the condition of the slaves. Knowing that they are the object of your care, from their chiefs, through whom you will accomplish this work, they would be satisfied ; and the peace that is interrupted would be restored in a short time.

But do not expect, Messrs. Deputies, that we would consent to take up arms on account of the wishes of the revolutionary assemblies. We are the subjects of three kings, the King of Congo, born master of all the blacks ; the King of France, who represents our fathers ; and the King of Spain, who represents our mothers. These three kings are descendants of those who, led by a star, have been worshipped as the Man-God. If we serve the Assemblies, we should perhaps be led into fighting against our brothers, the subjects of these three kings, to whom we have promised fealty.

And then, we do not know what is understood by the will of the nation, seeing that *since the people* reigned, we have carried out only that of the king. The prince of France loves us, the prince of Spain never ceases to help us. We help them, they help us; it is the cause of humanity. And besides, these kings would fail us, unless we should quickly *enthrone a king*.

Such are our intentions, by means of which we will consent to make peace.

(Signed)

JEAN–FRANÇOIS, General.
BIASSOU, Field-Marshal.
DESPREZ, MANZEAU,
TOUSSAINT, AUBERT,
Commissioners *ad hoc*.' "

(This letter, absurdly characteristic, was really sent to the Assembly.)

"'You see,' added Biassou, after reading this specimen of negro diplomacy, each word of which is fixed in my memory, 'you see that we are mild. But this is what I want of you. Neither Jean-François nor I have been educated in the schools of the whites, where English is taught. We know how to fight, but we cannot write. But we do not wish to have anything in our letter to the Assembly which can excite the proud *burlerias* of our old masters. You seem to know this light art of which we are ignorant. Correct the mistakes in

our despatch which will make the whites laugh, and for this I will grant you your life."

"In this *rôle* of corrector-of-the-mistakes-of-Biassou's-diplomatic-orthography, there was something so revolting to my pride that I did not hesitate an instant. Besides, of what use was my life? I refused his offer.

"He seemed surprised.

"'What!' he cried, 'would you rather die than correct a few strokes of a pen on a bit of parchment?'

"'Yes,' I replied.

"My decision seemed to puzzle him. After an instant's thought, he said: —

"'Listen attentively, young fool; I am less obstinate than you. I will give you until to-morrow evening to decide if you will obey me or not; to-morrow, at set of sun, you shall return to me. Consider well if you will satisfy my command. Adieu; let night bring good counsel to you. You well know that with us death is not merely death.'

"The meaning of these last words, which were accompanied by a frightful laugh, was not hard to understand; and the tortures that Biassou was accustomed to invent for his victims completed their meaning.

"'Candi, remove the prisoner,' continued Biassou; 'give him into the custody of the blacks of Morne-Rouge. I wish him to live one more round of the sun, and my other soldiers perhaps would not have the patience to wait another twenty-four hours.'

"The mulatto Candi, the chief of his company, ordered my hands tied behind me. A soldier then seized the end of the rope, and we left the cave.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"When an unexpected shock and trouble and misery come all at once into the midst of a happy and quiet life, the sudden blow awakens the soul from its repose of calmness and joy. Trouble which comes in this way does not seem a reality, but only a dream. To one who has always been happy, the first stage of despair is stupor. Sudden misfortune is like a torpedo; it shakes, but makes one torpid, and the startling light that it suddenly throws before our eyes is not daylight. Men, objects, facts, pass before us in fantastic shapes, and move as in a dream. Everything on the horizon of our life is changed, the atmosphere and the perspective; but it takes a long time for our eyes to lose that shining picture of past happiness which continually interposes between them and the dark present, changing the color, and giving something indescribably unreal to reality. Then everything real seems impossible and absurd; we scarcely believe in the fact of our own existence, because finding nothing around us which makes up our life, we do not understand how it all could disappear without dragging us with it, and why we alone remain of all our past life. If this confused condition of the soul continue for long, it disarranges the equilibrium of thought and becomes madness, perhaps a happy state, in which life is no longer anything but a vision to the unfortunate one, and he himself its phantom.

CHAPTER XL.

"I DO not know, gentlemen, why I say all this to you. They are not ideas that can be understood or explained. One must feel them in order to comprehend them. I have felt them. My mind was in this state when Biassou's guards gave me to the negroes of Morne-Rouge. It seemed to me that they were phantoms, giving me to phantoms; and without offering any resistance, I let myself be tied to the trunk of a tree. They brought me some boiled potatoes, which I ate with that sort of mechanical instinct which the goodness of God gives man in the midst of mental trouble.

"Night had fallen; my guardians withdrew to their *ajoupas,* leaving only six with me. They were sitting or lying about a great fire which they had lighted in order to keep off the cold of the night. In a few moments they were all sleeping soundly.

"My physical condition augmented the vague reveries which were wandering through my brain. I recalled those happy days, a few weeks before, which I had passed by Marie's side, without a thought for the future, save one of eternal happiness. I compared them to the day which had just ended, during which many and strange events had passed before my eyes, as though to make me doubt their reality; during which my life had been condemned three times, and not saved even now. I meditated upon my future, which consisted only of the next day, and which presented nothing certain but misery, and the death which fortunately would follow. It seemed as though I were struggling against a frightful nightmare. I asked myself if it were possible that all which had happened was really over, — that my surroundings were the camp of the blood-thirsty Biassou; that Marie

was lost to me forever; that this captive, guarded by six barbarians, bound and doomed to certain death, this captive whom I saw in the lurid light of the fire, was indeed myself. Then, in spite of my every effort to thrust from me a still more despairing thought, my mind returned to Marie. I asked myself, in agony, what could have been her fate; I tightened my ropes in my struggles to fly to her aid, hoping every instant that the horrible dream would vanish, and that God would not permit the horrors, of which I dared not think, to come to the angel whom he had given me for my wife. This sad train of thought always brought Pierrot before me, and my fury against him made me almost insane; the veins in my forehead seemed ready to burst; I hated myself, I cursed myself, I despised myself, for having for one instant united my friendship for Pierrot and my love for Marie; and without trying to explain to myself what motive he could have had for hurling himself into the Grande-River, I wept at not having killed him. He was dead; I was about to die; and my only regret was my unsatisfied vengeance.

"All these thoughts were surging through my mind in the midst of a doze, into which exhaustion had thrown me. I do not know how much time passed; but suddenly I was roused by the sound of a man's voice singing faintly, but distinctly, '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*' I opened my eyes with a start; it was night, the negroes were asleep; the fire was dying out. I heard nothing more; I thought that the voice was a dream, and my heavy eyelids closed again. Then I opened them like a flash; for the voice was nearer, and was singing in sad tones this verse of a Spanish romance: —

'En los campos de Ocaña
Prisionero cai
Me llevan à Cotadilla
Desdichado fui;'

which, translated, runs something like this: —

'In the fields of Ocaña,
Sad captive I lay,
Then to Cotadilla,
They bore me away!'

"This time it was no longer a dream. It was the voice of Pierrot. Again it rose in the silent night, and I heard the well-known strain, '*Yo que soy contrabandista.*' A dog bounded madly up to me; it was Rask. I raised my eyes. A black stood before me, and a flicker from the dying fire showed me his colossal figure by the side of the dog; it was Pierrot. Vengeance made me mad; surprise made me mute and immovable. I was not sleeping, and the dead had returned! It was not a dream, but an apparition. I turned away in horror. Then his head fell forward on his breast.

"'Brother,' he murmured, in a low tone, "You promised never to doubt me when you heard me singing that air. Brother, have you forgotten your promise?'

"Anger gave me words.

"'Monster!' I cried, 'I see you again, do I? Hangman, murderer of my uncle, betrayer of Marie, do you dare to call me brother? Stop, do not come near me!'

"I forgot that I was tied so that I could not move. Involuntarily my eyes sought my sword.

"He guessed my intention. His manner was sad and gentle.

"'No,' said he, 'I will not come near you. You are unhappy, and I pity you; but you do not pity me, although I am more wretched than you.'

"I shrugged my shoulders. He understood the gesture, and looked at me in a dreamy way.

"'Yes, you have lost much; but, believe me, I have lost more.'

"Our voices had wakened my six guardians. Seeing a stranger, they sprang up, and seized their arms; but as soon as they recognized Pierrot, they gave a cry of joyful surprise, and fell on their knees, their foreheads touching the ground.

"But nothing at the moment made any impression on me, — neither the respect of the negroes for Pierrot, nor the way in which Rask rubbed first against his master, then against me, watching me anxiously, as though wondering at my cold wel-

come. I was entirely mastered by my rage, I was powerless in the bands which held me.

"'Oh!' I cried at last, writhing in fury beneath the cords which bound me, 'Oh! how wretched I am! I regretted that the man had done himself justice; I believed him dead, and I was bemoaning my vengeance. And now there he stands, and he has just defied me; he is here, living, before me, and I cannot have the joy of killing him! Oh! who will unloose these wretched cords?'

"Pierrot turned to the negroes, who were still kneeling before him.

"'Comrades,' said he, 'unbind the prisoner!'

CHAPTER XLI.

"His command was obeyed instantly. My six guardians hastily cut the cords which bound me, and I stood upon my feet, free, but I did not move; surprise kept me silent.

"'That is not all,' then said Pierrot. Seizing the dagger from one of his negroes, he handed it to me, saying, 'You may have satisfaction now. God does not wish me to argue with you your right to kill me! You have saved my life three times; it is yours now; strike if you will.' There was in his voice neither bitterness nor reproach, only sadness and resignation.

"This unexpected opening to my vengeance, given by one whom I longed to meet, was strange and sudden. I felt that all my hatred for Pierrot, all my love for Marie, was not enough to make me an assassin; and, whatever the appearances, a voice cried out from my innermost heart that an enemy and a culprit would not stand thus before vengeance and punishment. Must I tell you? There was something in the imperious bearing of this strange being that conquered me in spite of myself. I pushed away the dagger.

"'Wretched man!' I said, 'I should like to kill you in a fight, but I will not assassinate you. Defend yourself.'

"'Defend myself!' cried he, astonished, 'against whom?'

"'Against me!'

"He made a gesture of amazement.

"'Against you? This is the only thing in which I cannot obey you. Do you see Rask? I could easily choke him; he would submit to it. But I should not know how to make him fight with me; he would not understand me. I do not understand you; I am like Rask.'

"After a moment he added, —

"'I see hatred in your eyes, as once you saw it in mine. I know that you have suffered misfortune indeed. Your uncle has been murdered, your plantations burned, your friends killed, your houses sacked, your heritage devastated; but it was not I who did it, but mine. Listen; I told you once that your people had done me great injury; you replied that it was not you; what have I done?'

"His face lighted up; he expected me to fall into his arms, but I looked at him wildly.

"'You deny all that your people have done to me,' said he in an angry tone, 'and you do not mention what you yourself have done! Well?' he asked.

"I strode up to him, and my voice was like thunder.

"'Where is Marie? What have you done with Marie?'

"A shadow crossed his face; for a moment he seemed embarrassed. Then —

"'Maria!' he replied. 'Yes, you are right. But we have too many listeners here.'

"His embarrassment, and the words, '*You are right*,' roused a hell in my heart. I thought he was trying to evade my question. He looked at me with an open face, saying in a tone of deep emotion, —

"'Do not suspect me, I implore you. I will tell you about this in another place. Come, love me as I love you, in confidence.' He paused an instant to observe the effect of his words. Then he added softly, —

"'May I call you brother?'

"But my jealous anger had resumed all its violence; and the tender words, which sounded hypocritical, only exasperated me.

"'How dare you remind me of that time,' I cried, 'you ungrateful wretch!'

"He interrupted me. Great tears shone in his eyes.

"'It is not I who am ungrateful!'

"'Well, speak,' I cried. 'What have you done with Marie?'

"'In another place, another place!' he replied. 'Here we cannot hear ourselves speak. Besides, you would not believe me were I to give you my word of honor, and time flies. It is already daylight, and I must get you away from here. Listen; all is over, since you doubt me, and you would do well to kill me. But wait a while before carrying out what you term your vengeance; I must first set you free. Come, let us find Biassou.'

"His words and manner seemed to hide a mystery which I could not fathom. In spite of my feeling against the man, his voice always touched some chord in my heart. When I heard it, a strange power held me, and now I found myself hesitating between vengeance and pity, defiance and a blind submission. Finally I followed him.

CHAPTER XLII.

We left the negro-quarter of Morne-Rouge. It was strange to be walking unguarded across the barbarians' fields, where the evening before every brigand seemed thirsting for my blood. Now, far from trying to stop us, the blacks and the mulattoes bowed down before us with exclamations of surprise, joy, and respect. I did not know what position Pierrot held in the rebel army; but I remembered the power he had shown over his companions, and I easily understood the influence he seemed now to have among the rebels.

"When we reached the row of guards in front of Biassou's cave, their commander, the mulatto Candi, advanced, calling to us to know how we dared come so near to the general's cave; but when he saw that it was Pierrot, he quickly removed his gold embroidered *moutera*, and, as though terrified at his boldness, he bowed to the ground, and led us to Biassou, stammering excuses, to which Pierrot paid no attention except by a scornful gesture.

"The respect of the mere negro soldiers for Pierrot had not surprised me; but to see Candi, one of their head officers, bowing down before my uncle's slave, made me begin to wonder who the man was whose authority seemed so great; and it was a stranger thing still when I saw the *generalissimo*, who was alone quietly eating a *calalou*, hastily rise at sight of Pierrot, and hiding his anxious surprise and violent anger beneath a deeply respectful manner, bow humbly before his comrade, and offer him his own mahogany throne. Pierrot declined it.

"'Jean Biassou,' said he, 'I do not come to take your place, but merely to ask a favor.'

"'*Alteza*,' replied Biassou, bowing again, 'you know that

you can do as you please with everything around Jean Biassou, with all that belongs to him, with Jean Biassou himself.'

"The title of *alteza*, equivalent to *highness* or *majesty*, thus applied to Pierrot, increased my surprise still more.

"'I am not going to ask much,' quickly replied Pierrot; 'I ask only for the life and the liberty of this prisoner.'

"He pointed to me. Biassou seemed stunned for an instant; but he hesitated only for a moment.

"'You distress your slave, *Alteza;* you demand of him much more than he can grant you, to his great regret. This prisoner does not belong to Jean Biassou, nor has Jean Biassou anything to do with him.'

"'What do you mean?' asked Pierrot severely. 'To whom does he belong? Is there other power here than yours?'

"'Alas, yes, *Alteza!*'

"'Whose?'

"'That of my army.'

"The wheedling, crafty manner in which Biassou evaded the frank, haughty questions of Pierrot showed that he was determined to give only the respect which he was obliged to show him.

"'Your army!' cried Pierrot; 'and do you not command that?'

"Biassou, preserving his advantage, without however forgetting his respectful manner, replied with an air of sincerity, —

"'Does *su Alteza* think that one really commands men who revolt only in order to disobey?'

"I valued my life too highly to speak; but what I had seen on the previous night of Biassou's unlimited authority over his soldiers showed me that he was lying, and I could have said so. Pierrot replied, —

"'Well, if you cannot command your army, if your soldiers are your commanders, what reason can they have for hating this prisoner?'

"'Bouckmann has just been killed by the government troops,' said Biassou, making his bold and sneering features assume a sad expression. 'My men have sworn vengeance upon this white for the death of the commander of the yellow negroes of Jamaica; they want to show trophy for trophy, and they ask for the head of this young officer to counterbalance Bouckmann's in the scales where the *bon Giu* weighs both sides.'

"'How could you listen to such a horrible retaliation?' asked Pierrot. 'Hear me, Jean Biassou; it is such cruelty as this which is the reason of our losing our just cause. I have been a prisoner in the camp of the whites, from whom I have succeeded in escaping, and I had not heard of Bouckmann's death, which you mention. But it is Heaven's just punishment for his crimes. I will tell you something else; Jeannot, the very commander of the blacks who served as a guide to the whites to entrap them into the ambuscade of Dompte-Mulâtre, — Jeannot, too, has just died. Do not interrupt me, Biassou! You know that he rivalled Bouckmann and you in cruelty; but note this: it was not Heaven, it was not the whites, who killed him, but Jean-François himself who committed this act of justice.'

"Biassou, who was listening respectfully, gave a cry of surprise. Just then Rigaud entered, bowed humbly to Pierrot, and whispered something to the *generalissimo*. Without, a tumult was heard in the camp. Pierrot continued, —

"'Yes, Jean-François, whose only fault is his fatal luxury, and the absurd equipage, with its six horses, in which he drives daily from his camp to mass to the curate of the Grande-River, has avenged Jeannot's cruelty. In spite of the cowardly prayers of the brigand, and although at the last moment he clung to the vicar of Marmelade, begging for pardon in such terror that they had to take him away by force, the wretch was shot yesterday, at the foot of the very tree which is covered with the iron hooks on which he had been in the habit of hanging his victims alive. Biassou,

think of this! Why commit these murders which drive the whites to madness? Why use jugglery to excite the fury of our wretched comrades, who are already incensed? At Trou-Coffi there is a mulatto charlatan named Romaine-la-Prophétesse, who makes fanatics of an army of blacks. He violates the Holy Mass; he persuades them that he is in communication with the Holy Virgin, whose oracles he pretends to hear in the tabernacle; and he incites his comrades to murder and pillage in the name of Mary!'

"There was perhaps an accent even more gentle than that of veneration with which Pierrot uttered this name. I do not know why, but it offended and irritated me.

"'Well,' continued the slave, 'there is in your camp some *obi* or juggler like this Romaine-la-Prophétesse! I know that with an army to command, which is made up of men from every country, of every family, of every color, you need some common bond; but can you not find it somewhere besides in a ferocious fanaticism and absurd superstitions? Believe me, Biassou, the whites are less cruel than are we. I have seen planters protect their slaves; I know that in the case of many, it was not in order to save a life, but to win money; but at least their interest brings out a virtue. To be no less kind than they, is also to our interest. Will our cause be holier or more just when we shall have killed the women, murdered the children, tortured the old men, and burned the colonists in their homes? Yet such are our daily acts. Tell me, Biassou, must our every footstep always be marked by a line of blood or fire?'

"'He was silent. His look, the accent of his voice, gave to his words a power of conviction and authority impossible to describe. Like a fox seized by a lion, the side glance of Biassou seemed looking for some means by which he could escape the influence. While he was thus meditating, the commander of the army of Cayes, the same Rigaud who on the previous evening had looked so calmly upon the horrors about him, appeared as though indignant at the outrages

which Pierrot had described, and cried out with hypocritical consternation : —

"'But, good Lord! What can one do with an infuriated mob?'

CHAPTER XLIII.

"The tumult without seemed increasing. Biassou was becoming restless. I afterwards learned that the clamor came from the negroes of Morne-Rouge, who had rushed from the camp to tell of the return of my liberator, and to announce their intention to aid him in whatever cause he had come to argue with Biassou. Rigaud had just informed the *generalissimo* of this fact; and it was the fear of a fatal outbreak which drove the deceitful commander to yield to Pierrot's wishes.

"'*Alteza*,' said he in an angry tone, 'if we are hard on the whites, you are hard on us. You are wrong in accusing me of the violence of the torrent; it leads me on. But *que podria hacer ahora* (what can I do) that will please you?'

"'I have already told you, Señor Biassou,' replied Pierrot; 'let me take away this prisoner.'

"Biassou thought for a moment, and then said, looking as honest as he could: —

"'Well, *Alteza*, I will prove to you my desire to please you. Let me only say two words in secret to the prisoner; he will then be free to follow you.'

"'Most certainly you may,' replied Pierrot.

"And his face, which up to then had been proud and gloomy, shone with a great joy. He stepped back a few feet.

"Biassou took me to a corner of the cave, and said, in a low voice: —

"'I will grant you your life only on one condition; you know it, will you consent?' He showed me the despatch from Jean-François. To consent seemed to me cowardly.

"'No!' I cried.

"'Ah!' replied he, chuckling. 'Always so firm! You

have great confidence in your protector, have you not? Do you know who he is?'

"'Yes,' I answered quickly; 'he is a monster like yourself, only even more hypocritical.'

"He stepped back in astonishment, and looking into my eyes to see if I was serious, he asked, —

"'What! Do you really not know him?' I answered scornfully, —

"'I know that he was my uncle's slave, and that he is named Pierrot.' Biassou began to chuckle.

"'Ha! ha! This is strange! He asks for your life and your freedom, and you call him "a monster" like myself!'

"'What difference does it make?' I replied. 'If I were to have a moment of liberty, it would not be to ask him for my life, but for his!'

"'What is that?' asked Biassou. 'You seem to mean what you say, and I do not think you would play with your life. There is something in all this which I do not understand. You are protected by a man whom you hate; he pleads for your life, and you desire his death! Well, it's all the same to me. You wish a moment of liberty; this is the only favor I can grant you. I will allow you to follow him; only first give me your word of honor to return to me two hours before the set of the sun. You are French, are you not?'

"Must I tell you, gentlemen? Life was a burden to me; I scorned to take it from Pierrot, who seemed to me to deserve my hatred; I do not know if the idea entered my mind that Biassou, who did not easily give up his booty, would never consent to my freedom; I really wanted only a few hours in order that, before dying, I might find out the fate of my beloved Marie, and my own. The promise that Biassou asked of me (he trusted in the honor of a Frenchman) was an easy and certain means of gaining a whole day; I gave my word. Then the general approached Pierrot.

"'*Alteza*,' said he obsequiously, 'the white prisoner is at

your command ; you may take him away ; he is free to accompany you.' I never before had seen such joy in Pierrot's eyes.

" ' Thanks, Biassou ! ' he cried, holding out his hand. ' Thanks ! You have done me a service which will forever make me indebted to you ! Continue to dispose of my brothers of Morne-Rouge until my return.'

" He turned to me.

" ' Since you are free,' said he, ' come ! '

" And he led me out in strange haste.

" Biassou looked at us in amazement, which even his demonstrations of respect at Pierrot's departure did not hide.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"I LONGED to be alone with Pierrot. His embarrassment when I asked him about Marie, the impudent tenderness with which he dared to utter her name, had augmented the feelings of rage and jealousy which had risen in my heart when I saw him carrying her away from the burning Fort Galifet, her whom I had scarcely called wife. Of what use, after that, were the generous reproaches which he had uttered in my presence to the bloodthirsty Biassou, or the care he took to save my life, or the power of his every word and action? What did I care about the mystery which seemed to be about him; which made him appear living before me, when I thought I had helped to bring about his death; which had shown him to me a captive among the whites, when I had seen him jump into the Grande-River; which changed the slave into a monarch, and set the prisoner free? Of all these incomprehensible facts, the only one which I clearly understood was his odious rapture over Marie; this was an outrage to avenge, a crime to punish. The strange scenes which had already taken place, scarcely sufficed to make me suspend judgment, and I waited impatiently for the moment when I could force my rival to explain. At last that moment arrived.

"We had passed the triple lines of blacks who bowed down before us, crying out in surprise: '*Miraculo! Ya no esta prisionero!*' ('A miracle! he is not longer a prisoner!') I do not know if they referred to me or to Pierrot. We crossed the final lines of the camp; Biassou's last scouts were lost behind the trees and rocks. Rask, joyous, was in advance of us, every now and then running back to us; Pierrot was walking quickly, but I suddenly stopped him.

"'Listen,' I said; 'it is useless to go farther. The ears you fear cannot hear us now; tell me, what have you done with Marie?'

"My concentrated emotion made me gasp. He looked at me with a gentle expression.

"'Always the same question!' he replied.

"'Yes, always!' I cried, furious, 'always! I will ask you this question until your last breath. Where is Marie?'

"'Can nothing make you cease doubting me? You will soon know.'

"'Soon, monster!' I cried. 'It is now that I would know. Where is Marie? Where is Marie? Do you hear? Answer, or exchange your life for mine. Defend yourself!'

"'I have already told you,' he answered sadly, 'that this cannot be. The torrent does not fight against its source; my life, which you have thrice saved, cannot struggle against yours. I wish it were otherwise; but it would still be impossible, for we have but one dagger between us.'

"As he spoke, he drew the weapon from his belt and handed it to me.

"'Take it,' said he.

"I was beside myself with rage. I seized the dagger, and raised it over his breast. He did not think of saving himself.

"'Wretch,' I cried, 'do not force me to become an assassin. I will plunge this knife into your very soul if you do not tell me this instant where my wife is.'

"He replied calmly, —

"'You are master. But I beg you with clasped hands to let me live one more hour, and to follow me. You doubt him who owes you three lives, him whom you called brother; but listen, if in one hour you still doubt, you will be free to kill me. It will be time enough then. You see that I do not wish to resist; I beg you even in the name of *Maria*' — he added sadly, 'of your wife — just one hour; and I ask it, not for myself, but for you!'

"His voice was unspeakably sad and persuasive. Something seemed to tell me that perhaps he spoke the truth; that mere interest in life would not give the tender tone to his voice, that sweet supplication, and that he was pleading for more than himself. Again I yielded to the power which he held over me, and which I blushed to confess to myself.

"'Well,' I said, 'I will give you one more hour; I will follow you.'

"I handed him back his dagger.

"'No,' he replied, 'keep it; you defy me. But come, let us not lose time."

CHAPTER XLV.

"We continued on our way. During our conversation Rask had grown impatient; and every now and then he ran back to us, asking us by a look why we stopped. Now he went on joyfully ahead of us. We had entered a virgin forest; and after a walk of about an hour we reached a pretty green opening, watered by a spring in the rock, bordered by young shrubs and filled with great trees which had stood there for centuries. A cave opened upon this savanna; and over its entrance climbed many vines, — clematis, bindweed, and jasmine. Rask began to bark joyfully; but Pierrot silenced him by a gesture, and without saying a word we entered the cave.

"A woman, with her back to the light, was seated within, on an Esparto rug. At the sound of our footsteps she turned. Friends, it was Marie!

"She wore a white dress as on our wedding-day, and still had in her hair the crown of orange-blossoms, the last virgin garland of the young wife, which my hands had not taken from her forehead. She saw me, uttered a shriek, and fell into my arms fainting from joy and surprise. I was speechless.

"At her cry an old woman with a child in her arms came running from the rear of the cave. It was Marie's nurse and my unfortunate uncle's youngest son. Pierrot brought some water from the nearest spring. He sprinkled some on Marie's face, and the fresh drops brought her back to life. She opened her eyes.

"'Léopold!' she cried, 'my Léopold!'

"'Marie!' I whispered, and the rest of our words were smothered in kisses.

"'Ah, not before me, at least!' cried a despairing voice.

"We raised our eyes. Pierrot was there, looking as though he were being tortured. His chest heaved, an icy perspiration fell in great drops from his brow. Every limb trembled. All at once he hid his face in his hands, and rushed from the cave, crying fiercely, 'Not before me!'

"Marie half-raised herself from my arms, exclaiming, —

"'Heavens, Léopold! he seems strangely affected. Is it possible that he loves me?'

"The slave's cry had shown me that he was my rival. Marie's question now proved that he was also my friend.

"'Marie!' I cried, and an inexpressible joy, a mortal regret, sank into my heart, 'Marie! did you not know?'

"'But I do not yet know,' said she with a modest blush. 'Do you mean that he loves me? I never dreamed it.'

"I pressed her wildly to my heart.

"'I have found my wife and my friend!' I cried; 'how happy I am, and yet how guilty! I doubted him.'

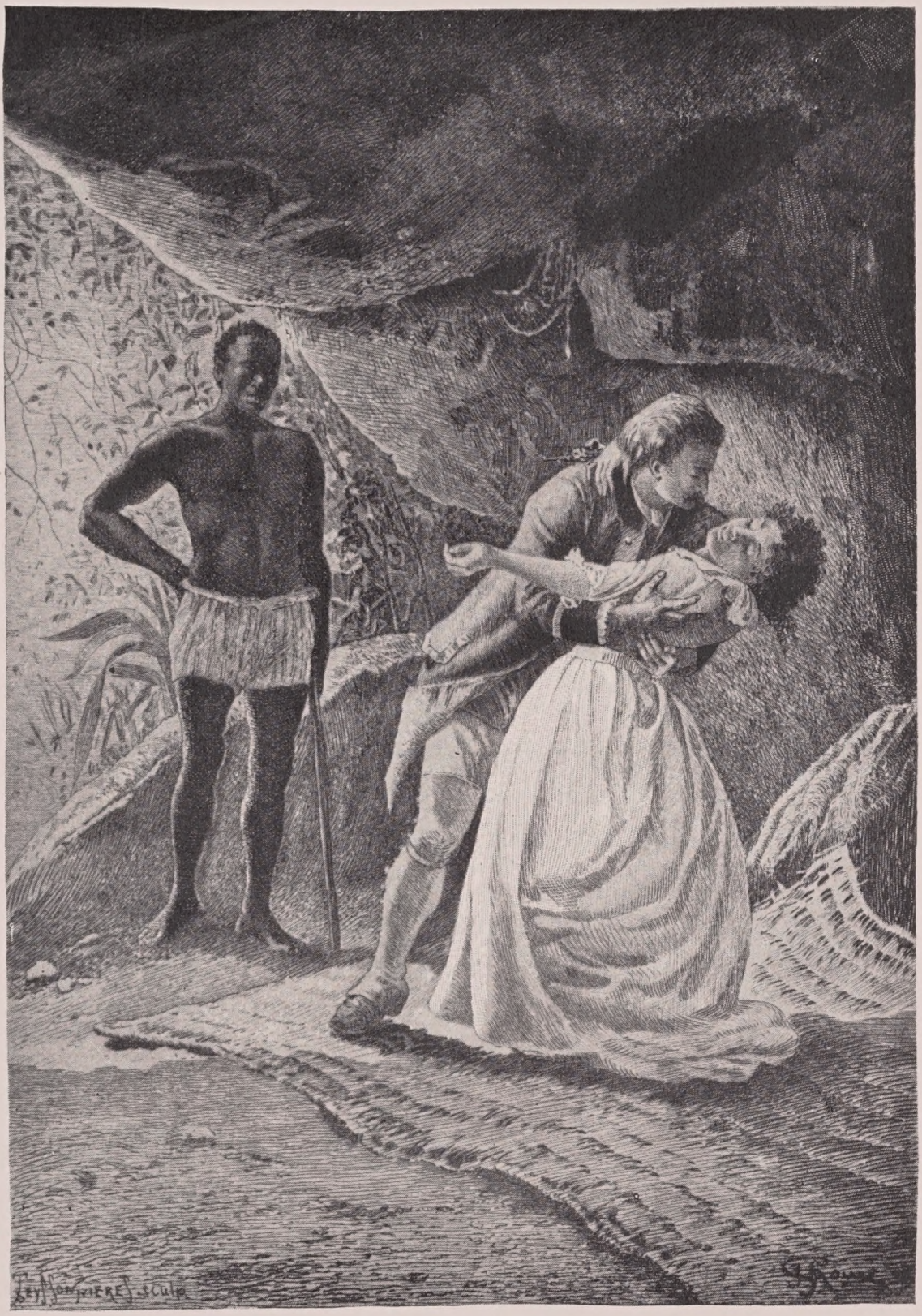
"'What!' cried Marie, amazed. 'Pierrot! Oh! indeed you are greatly to be blamed. You owe him my life twice, and perhaps more,' she added, her eyes falling. 'Had it not been for him the crocodile would have devoured me; had it not been for him, the negroes — it was Pierrot who snatched me from them just as they were going to kill me.' She began to cry.

"'And why,' I asked, 'why did not Pierrot send you back to your husband at the Cape?'

"'He tried to,' she replied, 'but he could not. He was obliged to hide from the blacks as well as the whites, and it made it doubly hard for him. And then they did not know what had happened to you. Some said they heard you were dead; but Pierrot assured me that this was not so, and I knew he was right, because something told me so; had you died, I should have died at the same time.'

"'Then it was Pierrot who brought you here?' I cried.

"'Yes, Léopold; he alone knows of this cave. He also saved all that was left of my family, my good nurse and my



"I PRESSED HER WILDLY TO MY HEART."

little brother, and hid us here. I assure you it has been very comfortable; and if the war were not going on, I should like to stay here with you, since all we have is lost. Pierrot provided for all our needs. He came often; he wore a red feather in his cap. He consoled me, talked to me of you, and promised that I should be restored to you. But I have not seen him for three days, and I was beginning to be anxious, when he came with you. So this poor dear friend went to find you?'

"'Yes,' I answered.

"'But how can it be that he is in love with me? Are you sure?' she asked.

"'Sure,' I replied. 'It was he who, when about to stab me, stopped for fear of wounding you; it was he who sang those love-songs in the arbor by the river.'

"'Really?' asked Marie, in naïve surprise, 'he is your rival! The wicked man is this good Pierrot! I cannot believe it. He has been so humble, so respectful with me, even more so than when he was our slave! It is true that sometimes he looked at me in a strange way, but I attributed it to my misfortunes. If you only knew with what passionate affection he has talked to me of my Léopold! His friendship for you is like love.'

"These revelations both pained and delighted me. I recalled how cruelly I had treated this generous Pierrot, and I understood all the strength of his tender and resigned reproach: 'It is not I who am ungrateful!'

"Just then Pierrot returned. His face was sad and gloomy. He looked like a victim returning from torture, suffering but triumphant. He came slowly up to me, and said calmly, pointing to the dagger at my belt, —

"'The hour is over.'

"'The hour! What hour?' I asked.

"'The one you granted me; I needed it to bring you here. I begged you to let me live; now I implore you to let me die.'

"At these words my heart was torn with every emotion;

love, friendship, gratitude struggled together, and I was in despair. I fell at the feet of the slave, sobbing bitterly, unable to utter a word. He raised me hastily.

"'What are you doing?'

"'I am rendering the homage which you deserve; I am unworthy of such friendship. Your generosity cannot be great enough to forgive my ingratitude.'

"His face still showed traces of a struggle, he still seemed undergoing a violent conflict; he stepped nearer me, hesitated, opened his mouth, then closed it. But the silence was of short duration; and at last he held out his arms, saying, —

"'May I call you brother now?'

"I answered by throwing myself upon his breast.

"After a pause he said, —

"'You are good, but misery made you unjust.'

"'I have found my brother,' I answered; 'I shall be unhappy no longer; but I have much to blame myself for.'

"'To blame yourself for! Brother, I blame myself too, and far more than you. You are unhappy no longer; I shall be so forever!'

CHAPTER XLVI.

The joy which the first touch of friendship had brought to his face, faded, and his features assumed an expression of strange sadness.

"'Listen, I will tell you my story,' said he coldly; 'my father was king of the country of Kakongo. He rendered justice to his subjects at his door, and over every judgment that he passed he drank a full cup of wine from the palm. This was the custom of the kings. We were happy and influential. Some Europeans arrived. From them I learned the useless knowledge which has attracted you. Their commander was a Spanish captain; he promised my father lands greater than his own, and white women as well; my father followed him with his family. Brother, they sold us!'

"The chest of the black heaved, his eyes shone; he mechanically broke off a small medlar shoot that was growing near him, and then continued, but without looking at me: —

"'The governor of the country of Kakongo had a master, and his son worked as a slave on the ridges of San Domingo. They separated the young fellow from his old father, in order to conquer them the more easily. They took the young wife from her husband, that they might make a profit by uniting them with others. The little children sought the mother who had nourished them, the father who had bathed them in the rivers; but they found only barbarous tyrants, and their bed was with dogs!'

"He was silent, his lips moved, but no sound came from them, his eyes were fixed and staring. At last he seized my arm roughly.

"'Brother, do you hear? I was sold to various masters as though I were a beast. You remember the punishment of

Ogé; on that day I saw my father; he was on the rack!' I shuddered. He continued: —

"'My wife had been prostituted to some whites. Listen, brother; she is dead, and asked me to avenge her. Shall I tell you?' he added hesitatingly, lowering his eyes, 'I did wrong, I loved another. But never mind that! All my people urged me to deliver them, and to avenge myself. Rask brought me their messages.

"'I could not satisfy them, for I myself was a captive in your uncle's prison. The day when you obtained my pardon, I hastened to free my children from the hands of a cruel master. Brother, when I reached them, the youngest of the grandchildren of the King of Kakongo had just been killed by a white! The others, too, had been murdered.'

"He stopped, and asked coldly, —

"'Brother, what would you have done?'

"This sad story froze me with horror. I answered his question by a threatening gesture. He understood its meaning, and smiled bitterly. Then he continued: —

"'The slaves revolted against their master, and punished him for the murder of my children. They chose me their leader. You know the misery of this rebellion. I heard that your uncle's slaves were preparing to follow the example of the others. I reached l'Acul the very night of the insurrection. You were away. Your uncle had been murdered. The blacks had already set fire to the plantations. I was unable to calm their fury, because they thought that by burning your uncle's estates they were avenging me. I looked around for the rest of your family. I entered the fort through the hole I had made. I gave your wife's nurse to a trusty black, but it was more difficult to save your *Maria*. She had rushed into the burning portion of the fort, in order to save her youngest brother, who alone had escaped being murdered. She was surrounded by blacks, who were just going to kill her as I appeared. I told them to let me avenge myself, and they fell back. I took your wife in my arms, I

intrusted the child to Rask, and I brought them both to this cave, of which no one but myself knew. Brother, this was my crime.'

"I was more and more filled with gratitude and remorse, and longed to fall again at Pierrot's feet; but he prevented me, as though offended.

"'Well, come,' he added, taking my hand, 'bring your wife, and let all five of us leave.' I asked him in surprise where he would take us.

"'To the camp of the whites,' he replied. 'This is no longer a safe place. To-morrow, at break of day, the whites are to attack Biassou's camp; and in all probability the forest will be burned. We have not a moment to lose; ten heads answer for mine. We can hasten, for you are free; we must, because I am not.' The words caused me surprise; I asked him what he meant.

"'Have you not heard that Bug-Jargal was captured?' asked he impatiently.

"'Yes, but what have you in common with Bug-Jargal?'

"It was his turn to be surprised, as he replied gravely, —

"'I am Bug-Jargal.'

CHAPTER XLVII.

"I was growing accustomed, as it were, to meeting with surprises in this man. It was not without astonishment that a moment previous I had heard that the slave Pierrot was an African king; and my admiration now reached its height when I discovered that he was the redoubtable and magnanimous Bug-Jargal, commander of the rebels of Morne-Rouge. Now I saw the reason for the respect which all the rebels, and even Biassou, felt for the commander Bug-Jargal, the King of Kakongo.

"He did not appear to notice the impression that his last words had made on me.

"'I heard,' he resumed, 'that you had been captured and were a prisoner in Biassou's camp; and I went to set you free.'

"'Why did you say just now that you were not free?'

"He looked at me as though wondering what had prompted such a question.

"'This morning,' said he, 'I was a prisoner among your men. I heard them say in the camp that Biassou intended before sunset to have a young captive, named Léopold d' Auverney, killed. I was closely guarded. I learned that my death would follow yours, and that in case of escape, ten of my comrades would be responsible for me. You see why I am in haste.'

"I detained him still another moment.

"'You escaped, did you?' I asked.

"'Otherwise, how should I be here? Had I not you to save? Did I not owe my life to you? Come, follow me. We are an hour's walk from the camp of the whites, as well as from Biassou's. See, the line of his cocoa-trees stretch

out beyond, with their round tops like the huge eggs of the condor. In three hours the sun will have set. Come, brother; time flies.'

"*In three hours the sun will have set!* The simple words froze me, as though a ghost stood before me. They recalled to my mind the fatal promise which I had made to Biassou. Alas! when I had looked upon Marie I had forgotten that we would soon be separated forever. I had been intoxicated, mad with joy; so many memories had rushed over me that I had forgotten my approaching death in my present happiness. My friend's words violently recalled my misery. *In three hours the sun will have set!* In one hour I must return to Biassou. My duty was plain before me; the brigand had my word, and it were better to die than to give this barbarian cause to doubt the only thing in which he still trusted, — a Frenchman's honor. The alternative was frightful. I chose as I should have chosen; but for an instant, gentlemen, I confess I hesitated. Could I be blamed for it?

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"At length, with a groan, I took Bug-Jargal's hand in one of mine, and poor Marie's in the other. Marie had been anxiously watching the shadow creeping over my face.

"'Bug-Jargal,' I said with an effort, 'I intrust to you the one being in the world whom I love more than you, — Marie. Return to the camp without me, for I cannot go.'

"'O God!' cried Marie, scarcely able to breathe, 'is it some new misfortune?'

"Bug-Jargal trembled. A look of sad surprise shone in his eyes.

"'Brother, what is it?'

"Marie's terror at the sole idea of some misfortune which her love seemed to guess, made me decide to hide the truth from her, and to spare her all heartrending adieu; so, leaning toward Bug-Jargal, I whispered in a low voice, —

"'I am a prisoner. I have promised Biassou to return and surrender myself two hours before sunset; I have promised to die.'

"He sprang forward in fury; his voice was like thunder.

"'The monster! That is why he asked to speak with you apart; it was to exact this promise from you. I should have defied this wretch of a Biassou. Why did I not foresee some perfidy? He is not a black, but a mulatto.'

"'What is the matter?' cried Marie, frightened. 'What perfidy? What promise? Who is Biassou?'

"'Keep still, keep still,' I said low to Bug-Jargal; 'let us not alarm Marie.'

"'Very well,' he said in a dull voice. 'But how could you have consented to such a promise? Why did you make it?'

"'I thought you false; I thought Marie was dead. Why should I want to live?'

"'But a promise by word of mouth cannot hold good with this brigand.'

"'I gave my word of honor.'

"He seemed for a moment as though trying to understand my meaning.

"'Your word of honor! What is that? Have you drunk from the same glass? Have you broken a ring or a branch of the red flowering maple between you?'

"'No.'

"'Well, then, what do you mean? How are you bound?'

"'By my honor,' I replied.

"'I do not know what that means. Nothing binds you with Biassou. Come with us.'

"'I cannot, brother; I have promised.'

"'No!' he cried with emphasis, 'you have not promised!' Then in a loud voice, 'Sister, help me to keep your husband from leaving us; he says he must go back to the negro-camp, from which I have just rescued him, because he has promised their leader Biassou that he would die.'

"'What have you done?' I cried.

"It was too late to avert the effect of the generous impulse which made him beg the help of the woman he loved, to save the life of his rival. Marie flung herself into my arms with a shriek of despair, clinging with clasped hands about my neck, for she was weak and could scarcely breathe.

"'Oh!' she cried in anguish, 'what is he saying, my Léopold? It is true, is it not, that he is fooling me? It is not true, is it, that just as he has brought us together, you must leave me, and leave me to perish? Answer me quickly or I shall die. You have no right to give up your life, because you have no right to kill me. Oh! you cannot want to leave me and never see me again!'

"'Marie, do not believe him. I am going to leave you, it is true; but we shall meet elsewhere.'

"'Elsewhere,' she cried in fright, 'elsewhere, where?'

"'In heaven,' I replied. I could not lie to this angel.

"She fainted again; but this time it was from despair. The moments were slipping by; my mind was made up. I laid her in Bug-Jargal's arms, and his eyes filled with tears.

"'Can nothing keep you?' he asked. 'I can say no more; but how can you resist Maria? For but one of the words she has just spoken, I would have given up the whole world, and you, you would not give up even dying for her.'

"'It is my honor!' I cried. 'Farewell, Bug-Jargal, farewell, brother; I bequeath her to you.'

"He took my hand; it seemed as though he scarcely heard me.

"'Brother, in the camp of the whites there is a relative of yours. I will give Maria to him; as to me, I cannot accept your legacy.'

"He pointed to a peak overlooking the surrounding country.

"'Do you see that rock? When the sign of your death appears there, the report of mine will not be long forthcoming. Farewell.'

"Without waiting to understand these last words, I embraced him. I kissed Marie's pale forehead (she was just beginning to revive under the nurse's care) and rushed away, fearing that her first look, her first cry, would unnerve all my strength.

CHAPTER XLIX.

"I FLED in blind haste, and plunged into the deep forest, following the path we had left, without daring to look behind me. In order to stifle the thoughts which filled my mind, I ran without stopping across the brushwood, over the savannas and hills, until I saw before me Biassou's camp on the summit of a cliff, with its lines of *cabrouets*, *adjoupas*, and clusters of blacks. Then I stopped. I had come to the end of my journey, to the end of my life. Weariness and exhaustion overpowered me. I leaned against a tree to keep from falling, and let my eyes wander over the picture in the fatal savanna below.

"I thought before then that I had tasted every drop of bitterness and gall; yet I did not know the cruellest of all misfortunes, — to be compelled by a moral force, more powerful than that of circumstances, to voluntarily renounce happiness when happy, life when living. A few hours before, what was life to me? I was not living. Deep despair is a species of death which makes one long for the real death. But I had been pulled out of this despair. Marie had been restored to me; my dead happiness had been resurrected, so to speak; my past was my future; and all my broken dreams had returned brighter than ever. Life, a life of youth, of love, of enchantment, had again opened radiant before me with its broad horizon. I could begin to live again; everything within me and without said so. There was no material obstacle, no visible hindrance. I was free, I was happy, yet I must die. I had taken but one step into paradise, and some duty, which was not even a glorious one, forced me to die. Death means little to a soul broken and torn by adversity; but its touch is cruel and cold when it

falls upon a young heart warm with life's blessings. I knew this at that moment. For an instant I had stepped from the tomb; I had touched in one short moment all that was most heavenly upon earth, — love, devotion, liberty; and now I must descend again within the sepulchre.

CHAPTER L.

"At last this feeling of regret gave way to one of rage. I strode on through the valley, feeling the need of haste. I reached the advance-posts of the negroes. They seemed surprised, and refused to admit me. Strange fact! I was almost compelled to beg them to do so till at last two of them undertook to lead me to Biassou.

"I entered the cave. The general was giving all his attention to several instruments of torture which lay near him. He turned as we entered; but the fact of my being there did not seem to astonish him.

"'Do you see?' he asked, pointing to the horrible implements.

"I was very calm; I knew the cruelty of the 'Hero of Humanity,' and I was determined to endure all without flinching.

"'Was not Léogrie fortunate to have been merely hanged?' he asked, chuckling.

"I watched him in scorn without speaking.

"'Call the chaplain,' said he to an aide-de-camp.

"For a moment we were silent, looking closely at each other.

"Rigaud entered in apparent agitation, and spoke a few words to the *generalissimo*.

"'Assemble all the commanders of my army,' said Biassou calmly.

"Fifteen minutes later they arrived before the cave in their various costumes. Biassou rose.

"'Listen, *amigos!* The whites are planning an attack to-morrow at daybreak. Our position is unsafe; we must leave it. At sunset, let us march toward the Spanish fron-

tier. Macaya, you will form the advance guard with your fugitive blacks. Padrejan, you spike the cannon stolen from the artillery of Praloto; it cannot be taken across the mountains. The soldiers of the Croix-des-Bouquets will move after Macaya. Toussaint will follow with the blacks of Léogane and du Trou. If the *griot* men and women make the slightest noise, I will hand them over to the executioner of the army. Lieutenant-Colonel Cloud will distribute the English guns left at Cape Cabron, and will lead the free half-breeds by the paths of the Vista. If there are any prisoners, let them be massacred. The weapons will be poisoned arrows. Three tons of arsenic must be thrown into the spring where the water is drawn for the camp; the colonists will think it is sugar, and will drink without distrust. The troops of Limbé, Dondon, and l'Acul will march after Cloud and Toussaint. Obstruct every avenue of the savanna with rocks; rifle the paths; burn the forests. Rigaud, you remain with us. Candi, you assemble our guard about us. The blacks of Morne-Rouge shall form the rear guard, and must not leave the savanna before sunrise.'

"Leaning to Rigaud, he said in a low tone, —

"'They are the blacks of Bug-Jargal; if only they might be killed here! *Muerta la tropa! muerto el gefe!* ('Kill the soldiers! kill their chief!') Go, *hermanos*,' said he, turning to them; 'Candi will give you the word.'

"The chiefs withdrew.

"'General,' said Rigaud, 'we must hasten the despatch of Jean-François. Our affairs are in a bad condition, and the letter might stop the whites.'

"Biassou hurriedly took it from his pocket.

"'That reminds me of it; but there are so many grammatical mistakes, as they say, in it, that it will make them laugh.'

"He handed me the paper. 'Listen to me; do you want to save your life? My kindness again appeals to your obstinacy. Help me to write over this letter. I will dictate my words to you; you shall write it in the *white style*.'

"I shook my head. He seemed impatient.

"'Do you mean that you will not?' he asked.

"'I will not!' I replied.

"He insisted.

"'Consider well.'

"And his glance seemed to draw me with it toward the instrument of torture with which he was playing.

"'It is because I have considered that I refuse,' I replied. 'You seem to fear for you and yours; you count upon your letter to the Assembly to retard the march and the attack of the whites. I do not wish to prolong my life when it will perhaps help to save yours. Let my tortures begin.'

"'Ah! ah! *muchacho!*' replied Biassou, pushing his foot against the instrument; 'it seems to me that you are becoming familiar with that. I am sorry, but I have no time to have it tried. This place is dangerous; we must leave it at once. Ah! you refuse to be my secretary! You are right; for I would have had you die afterwards just the same. One cannot live and know any secret of Biassou; moreover, my dear fellow, I have promised your death to our chaplain.'

"He turned to the *obi* who had entered.

"'Good father, is your squad ready?'

"The *obi* nodded affirmatively.

"'Is it made up of the blacks of Morne-Rouge? They are the only ones of the army who are not attending to the preparations for our departure.'

"The *obi* nodded a second time.

"Biassou then pointed to the great black flag in the corner of the cave, which I have already mentioned.

"'There is something which will announce to your men when they may give your epaulets to your lieutenant. You know that then I shall be already on the march. By the way, you have been walking about, how is the surrounding country?'

"'I noticed,' I replied coldly, 'that there were trees enough there on which to hang you and your entire army.'

"'Well,' he replied with a forced chuckle, 'there is a place that as yet you have not seen, but with which the *bon per* will make you acquainted. Farewell, young captain; good-night to Léogri.'

"He bowed with a laugh which reminded me of the sound of a rattlesnake, waved his hand and turned aside, and the negroes led me away. The veiled *obi* accompanied us, his missal in his hand.

CHAPTER LI.

"I WENT with them without offering any resistance, which indeed would have been useless. We climbed to the top of a cliff west of the savanna, where we halted a moment to rest. I threw a last look upon the setting sun, which would never again rise for me. My guides went on; I followed.

"We descended into a little valley, which at another time would have delighted me. A waterfall ran down its sides, making the earth soft and damp. This torrent emptied, at one end of the valley, into one of those blue lakes with which the interior of the mountains of San Domingo abound. Often, in happier times, I had sat down at twilight to dream upon the border of these beautiful lakes when their azure is changing into a sheet of silver, and where the reflection of the first stars of evening dot it with spangles of gold! The hour was at hand, but it would soon be over. How beautiful the valley seemed to me! Flowering plane-trees, maples of great height and breadth, clustering clumps of *mauritias*, — a sort of palm-tree which shuts out all other vegetation beneath its shade, — date-trees, magnolias with their large blossoms, great catalpas with their smooth cut leaves showing among the golden branches of the mock ebony-trees. The Canadian odier mingled its pale yellow blossoms with the blue of the wild honeysuckle. Fresh curtains of bindweed hid from sight the brown sides of the neighboring rocks. Everywhere from the green earth there arose a fresh odor like that which the first man must have breathed from the virgin roses in Eden. We walked along a path by the side of the waterfall. I was surprised to see this path end abruptly at the foot of a cliff, where I noticed an opening in the form of an arch, whence came the waterfall. A hollow sound, a strong rushing, was heard from behind this natural arch. The negroes took a path on the left, winding and rough,

and which seemed as though it had been cut by the waters of a cascade, long since dried up. We came upon a vault half-closed by blackberry-vines, holly-trees, and wild acacia blossoms, which hung over it. From within, came a sound like the one we had heard behind the arch in the valley. The blacks led me within. Hardly had I set foot there before the *obi* approached me, and said in a strange voice, —

"'This is what I have to tell you now; only one of us two shall go out from this vault and return by the path.' I scorned to answer. We advanced in the darkness; the noise became louder and louder, till we could not hear our own footsteps. I supposed the sounds came from a waterfall, and I was not mistaken.

"After a ten minutes' walk in the shade, we reached a sort of interior platform, cut out by Nature in the heart of the mountains. The greater part of this semicircular platform was inundated by the waterfall, which fell with frightful force from the under-ground springs. Above this subterranean room, the vault formed a sort of dome, covered with ivy of a yellowish color. A rift ran along almost the entire width of the vault; daylight entered here, and the edge was covered with green shrubs, now golden beneath the sun's rays. At the northern end of the platform the waterfall tumbled noisily into a whirlpool, within the depths of which the dim light from the rift seemed to flicker without being able to reach it. An old tree hung over the abyss, its topmost branches mingling in the foam of the cascade, and its knotty stem protruding through the rock one or two feet below the edge. Thus, at the same time, the tree bathed in the waterfall with its head and its root, which, like a fleshless arm, hung over the whirlpool, and itself was so bare of foliage that it was unrecognizable. It was a strange-looking object; only the dampness which penetrated its roots kept it from dying, while the violence of the waterfall constantly tore off each fresh branch, forcing it to be forever contented with the old ones.

CHAPTER LII.

"The blacks halted in this dreadful place, and I knew that I must die.

"There by the side of the whirlpool into which I had in a way thrown myself, the picture of the happiness I had so lately renounced, assailed me like a regret, almost like remorse. All entreaty was unworthy of me; but I could not help a groan.

"'Friends,' I said to the blacks around me, 'do you know that it is a sad thing to die at twenty, when one is full of life and strength, when one is loved by those he loves, and whom he leaves behind to mourn for him till their eyes close forever?'

"The words were received with a horrible laugh. It came from the little *obi*. This evil spirit, this strange being, then hastily approached me.

"'Ha! ha! ha! You long for life. *Labodo sea Dios!* My only fear was that you would have no terror of death!'

"It was the same voice, the same laugh, that had already baffled my conjectures.

"'Wretch!' I cried, 'who are you?'

"'You shall know!' he replied in a terrible voice. Then, removing the golden sun from his brown breast, he exclaimed, 'Look!'

"I leaned toward him. Two names were written in white letters on the *obi's* shaggy breast, the hideous and indelible marks branded on the breast of slaves by a burning-iron. One of these names was *Effingham*, the other was my uncle's and mine, *d'Auverney!* I stood transfixed with surprise.

"'Well, Léopold d'Auverney, does your name tell you mine?' asked the *obi*.

"'No,' I answered, astonished at hearing my name uttered by this man, and trying to rally my thoughts. 'These two names were on no breast save the clown's. But he is dead, the poor dwarf, and, besides, he loved us. You cannot be Habibrah!'

"'But I am!' cried he in a startling tone; and, raising the bloody *gorra*, he took off his veil. The deformed face of our hunchback stood before me, but with a look of wild joy on his face which had taken the place of the threatening, evil expression.

"'Great God!' I cried, struck almost dumb with amazement, 'are all the dead returning to life? It is Habibrah, my uncle's fool!'

"The dwarf placed his hand on his dagger, and said in a hollow voice, —

"'His fool, — and his murderer.'

"I sprang back in horror.

"'His murderer! Assassin, was it in this way that you thanked him for his kindness?' The *obi* interrupted me, —

"'His kindness! say rather his outrages!'

"'What!' I cried, 'was it you who killed him, you miserable wretch?'

"'Yes, I!' he replied with a horrible expression on his features. 'I plunged the knife so deep into his heart that he had scarcely time to awaken in order to die. He cried feebly, "Habibrah, come here!" — but I was there!'

"His atrocious story, his calm indifference, staggered me.

"'Wretch! cowardly assassin! Did you forget the favors he heaped upon you? You ate at his table; you slept by his bed' —

"'Like a dog!' Habibrah interrupted quickly; '*como un perro!* Ha! I remember only too well these favors, which were insults. I had my revenge on him; I will have it now on you. Listen! Do you think that because I am a mulatto, a dwarf, and deformed, that I am not a man? Ah, I have a soul, and a deeper and stronger one than that which I am

going to take away from your weak body! I was given to your uncle like a monkey. I served his will; I amused him. He loved me, you say; I did hold a place in his heart. Yes, between his monkey and his parrot; but I chose another, with my dagger.'

"I groaned aloud.

"'Yes,' the dwarf resumed, 'it is I! indeed it is! Look me in the face, Léopold d'Auverney! You have laughed at me often enough. Now you may groan. Ah! you recall to my mind the shameful preference your uncle showed for his *clown!* What a preference, *bon Giu!* When I entered your room, I was received with a scornful laugh; my figure, my deformity, my features, my absurd costume, even the pitiful infirmity of my mind, everything, suffered from the accursed jests of your uncle and his wretched friends. And I, I could not even be silent; I was compelled, *o rabia!* I was compelled to add my laughter to that which I aroused. Tell me, do you think that such humiliation is a reason for the gratitude of any human being? Do you think that it was not equal to the misery of the other slaves, their ceaseless labor, the heat of the sun, their iron collar, their master's whip? Do you not think that it was enough to rouse in a man's heart a fiery, implacable, eternal hatred, as lasting as the scourge of infamy which marks my breast? Oh, my revenge was too short for such long suffering! Could I have but made my hateful tyrant feel every torture which I had suffered every minute of every day! If he could only have known before he died the bitterness of wounded pride, and felt what burning marks the tears of shame and rage leave on a face forced to smile constantly! Alas! it is hard indeed to have waited so long for revenge, and to have ended it with a thrust of a dagger! If he could only have known whose hand struck him! But I was impatient to hear the last rattle in his throat; I plunged the knife too deep. He died without recognizing me; my fury cheated my revenge! This time, at least, it will be different. You see me, don't you? It is true

that you might have some difficulty in recognizing me in this new light. You never before saw me except with a happy, laughing face; now nothing prevents my soul from looking out from my eyes, and I do not resemble my own old self. You have known only my mask; this is my face!'

"It was indeed horrible.

"'Monster!' I cried, 'you deceive yourself; there is still something of the clown in the atrocity of your features and the cruelty of your heart.'

"'Do not speak of atrocity!' interrupted Habibrah. 'Remember your uncle's cruelty'—

"'Wretch!' I cried, enraged, 'if he was cruel, it was through you! You pity the lot of the unhappy slaves; why, then, did you turn against your brothers the advantage that the weakness of my uncle gave you? Why did you not try to influence him in their favor?'

"'I should have been sorry indeed to do that! I hinder a white from committing any act of cruelty! No, no! On the contrary, I strove rather to increase his cruel treatment of the slaves, in order to hasten the hour of their revolt, in order that their oppression might lead to revenge! So, by seeming to harm my brothers, in reality I helped them!'

"I was amazed at such hatred.

"'Well!' continued the dwarf, 'do you know now that I could plan and carry out my ideas? What think you of the fool Habibrah! What think you of your uncle's clown?'

"'Complete what you have so well begun,' I replied. 'Kill me, but do it quickly!'

"He began to walk up and down the platform, rubbing his hands together.

"'And suppose it does not please me to do it quickly? Suppose I wish to enjoy your anguish at my ease? Let me tell you this, Biassou owed me for my part in the plunder of the last village. When I saw you in the camp of the blacks, I asked only for your life, and he willingly granted it. Now it belongs to me, and I am amusing myself with it. Very

soon you will follow the waterfall into the whirlpool; make yourself easy. But I must tell you first, that I have discovered the spot where your wife has been hidden, that I have Biassou's promise to burn the forest (it must even now be in flames), and that in this way your entire family will be destroyed. Your uncle perished by the sword; you are about to die by water, and your Marie by fire!'

"'Wretch, wretch!' I cried, springing toward him.

"He turned to the negroes.

"'Men, bind him! His hour is come.'

"The negroes in silence began to tie me with the cords which they had brought with them. Suddenly I seemed to hear the distant barking of a dog, but I thought it was an illusion made by the roar of the waterfall. The negroes finished binding me, and led me to the brink of the whirlpool, into which I was to be hurled. The dwarf, with folded arms, was watching me, a look of triumphant joy on his face. I raised my eyes to the rift, to avoid his hateful face, and to see the sky once more. Just then I heard a louder and nearer bark, and the huge head of Rask rushed by the opening. I swayed. The clown cried, 'Now, then!' The blacks, who had not noticed the barking, seized me to hurl me into the midst of the abyss.

CHAPTER LIII.

"'COMRADES!' cried a voice of thunder. They turned; it was Bug-Jargal's. He stood at the edge of the rift, a scarlet plume floating from his head. 'Comrades, stop!'

"The blacks bowed to the earth. He continued, —

"'I am Bug-Jargal.'

"The blacks again bowed their foreheads to the ground, with cries which were hard to understand.

"'Unbind the prisoner,' cried the chief.

"At this point the dwarf recovered from the amazement into which the sudden presence of the man had thrown him. He laid his hands upon the blacks who were about to cut my cords. 'What is this?' he cried. '*Que quiere decir eso?*'

"Then, looking up at Bug-Jargal, —

"'Chief of Morne-Rouge, for what have you come here?'

"Bug-Jargal replied, —

"I come to command my brothers!'

"'Yes,' said the dwarf in concentrated rage, 'these are blacks of Morne-Rouge! But what right have you,' he raised his voice, 'to dispose of my prisoner?'

"'I am Bug-Jargal!' the chief replied. The blacks touched their foreheads to the ground.

"'Bug-Jargal,' resumed Habibrah, 'cannot undo what Biassou has done. Biassou gave me this white man; I wish him to die; he shall die. *Vosotros,*' shouted he to the blacks, 'obey! Hurl him into the whirlpool.'

"At the *obi's* powerful voice, the negroes rose and advanced toward me. I thought my time had come.

"'Unbind the prisoner,' cried Bug-Jargal.

"In the twinkling of an eye I was freed. My amazement equaled the *obi's* rage.

"He sprang upon me, but the blacks stopped him. Then he gave vent to imprecations and threats.

"'*Demonios! rabia! infierno de mi alma!* How! wretches! you refuse to obey me! You defy me, *mi voz!* why did I lose time, *el tiempo*, listening *este maldicho!* I should have thrown him at once to the fishes *del baratro!* On account of my wish for perfect revenge, I have lost all! *O rabia de Satan! Escuchate, vosotros!* If you do not obey me, if you do not hurl this evil white into the torrent, I will curse you! your hair shall turn white; the bugs and the mosquitoes shall devour you alive; your legs and your arms shall bend like rose-twigs; your breath shall scorch your throat like burning sand; you will die, and after your death your spirits will be condemned to turn a millstone as huge as a mountain for ever and ever, in the moon where it is freezing cold.'

"This picture had a strange effect upon me. The only white man, in this damp, black cave, surrounded by negroes like demons, hanging, as it were, upon the edge of the bottomless abyss; threatened in turn by the hideous clown, the deformed sorcerer, whose striped clothes and painted cap were scarcely visible in the pale light; and protected by a great black, who appeared at the only spot from which the sky could be seen, — I seemed to be at the gates of hell, awaiting the losing or the keeping of my soul, and helping at a stubborn fight between my good and evil spirit.

"The blacks seemed terrified at the maledictions of the *obi*. Wishing to take advantage of their hesitation, he cried, —

"'I wish this white man to die and you shall obey me; he shall die!'

"Bug-Jargal cried gravely, —

"'He shall live! I am Bug-Jargal. My father was king of the country of Kakongo, and rendered justice on the threshold of his home.'

"The blacks again prostrated themselves.

"The chief continued, —

"'Brothers, go to Biassou, and tell him not to unfurl upon

the mountain, the black flag which was to announce to the whites the death of this captive; for this captive has saved Bug-Jargal's life, and Bug-Jargal wishes him to live!'

"They rose. Bug-Jargal threw his red plume into their midst. The chief of the detachment crossed his arms upon his breast, and picked up the plume in awe; then they all went out without a word. The *obi*, too, disappeared within the shadows of the subterranean cavern.

"I will not attempt to describe to you, gentlemen, how I felt. I turned my moist eyes to Pierrot, who was watching me with a strange expression of gratitude and pride.

"'Thank God!' he said at last; 'you are saved. Brother, return by the way you came. You will see me again in the valley.'

"He waved his hand and withdrew.

CHAPTER LIV.

Anxious to reach this *rendezvous*, and to know how my protector had appeared just in time, I hastened to leave the frightful cave. But new dangers were in store for me. Just as I started toward the underground passage, an unseen object suddenly barred the entrance. It was Habibrah. The angry *obi* had not followed the negroes, as I had supposed, but had hidden himself behind a pile of rocks, waiting for the most propitious moment for him to take his revenge. The moment had come. The dwarf suddenly jumped up with a laugh. I was alone, unarmed; a dagger, the one which took the place of the crucifix, shone in his hand. At sight of him I sprang back involuntarily.

"'Ha, ha! *Maldicho!* you thought you had escaped me, but the fool is not so great a fool as you! I have you now, and this time I will not keep you waiting. Nor shall your friend Bug-Jargal await for you in vain. You shall go to the *rendezvous* in the valley, but the waters of this torrent shall carry you there.' He hurled himself upon me with upraised dagger.

"'Monster!' I cried, springing back upon the platform, 'but a moment ago you were a hangman, now you would be an assassin!'

"'I am avenging myself!' he cried, grinding his teeth.

"I was on the edge of the precipice; he rushed at me, in order to stab me. I avoided the blow, and his foot suddenly slipped upon the slimy moss which covered the damp rocks, and he fell into the abyss. 'A thousand devils!' he roared. I have said that a branch of an old tree protruded from the crevices of the rock, a little below the edge. In his fall, the dwarf's lace skirt caught upon one of the knots of this branch,

and seizing this last support, he grasped it with all his might. His pointed cap fell from his head, he had to let go of his dagger, and this and the tinkling *gorra* disappeared together within the depths of the cataract.

"Habibrah, thus suspended over the horrible whirlpool, at first strove to regain the platform; but his short arms reached only to the edge of the crag, and his nails clutched in vain the slimy surface of the rock which overhung the dark abyss. He groaned with rage.

"The slightest touch from me would have been enough to hurl him into the depths below; but I could not think of doing such a thing, it would have been cowardly. This fact struck him. Thanking Heaven for saving me in so unexpected a manner, I had decided to leave him to his fate, and was about to rush from the cavern, when I suddenly heard the dwarf's cry, imploring me to save him.

"'Master,' he cried, 'master, do not go, please! In the name of the *bon Giu*, do not leave me here to die, impenitent and unforgiven, a human being whom you can save. Alas! strength fails me, the branch slips and bends beneath my hand, the weight of my body drags me down, I shall either fall or it will break. Alas, master! the frightful whirlpool is seething below me! *Nombre santo de Dios!* have you no pity for your poor clown? He is indeed a criminal; but can you not prove to him that the whites are better than the mulattoes, the masters than the slaves?'

"I had approached the precipice, greatly moved; and the pale light from the rift showed me on the repulsive face of the dwarf an expression of supplication and distress which I had never seen there before.

"'Señor Léopold,' he went on, encouraged by an exclamation of pity which escaped me, 'is it true that one human being can see another in such a horrible position, and not aid him when he is able to do so? Alas! give me your hand, master. It needs only a little help to save me. It is so much for me and so little for you! Lift me up, I beg! My gratitude shall more than equal my crimes.'

"I interrupted him.

"'Wretched man! do not refer to that.'

"'It is to prove how I despise it, master!' he replied. 'Ah! be more generous than I. O Heavens, O Heavens! I grow weak, I fall, — *by desdichado!* Your hand, your hand! Give me your hand, in the name of the mother who bore you!' I cannot tell you how heartrending were his cries of terror and agony. I forgot everything. He was no longer an enemy, a traitor, an assassin; he was a wretched man, whom a mere turn of my hand could snatch from a frightful death. He implored me so pitifully. All words, all reproach, would have been unheeded by me, and useless; the need of help seemed urgent. I leaned over, and kneeling upon the edge, I held with one of my hands to the trunk of the tree, on the root of which the unfortunate Habibrah was suspended, and reached down the other to him.

"He caught it with his two hands with such strength, that, instead of raising himself up by it, as I had supposed he would do, he strove to pull me down into the abyss with him. If the trunk of the tree had not been firm, I should certainly have been jerked off the edge by the sudden and unexpected grasp which the wretch gave me.

"'Villain,' I cried, 'what are you doing?'

"'I am avenging myself!' he replied, with an infernal laugh. 'Ah! I have you now. Fool! you have given yourself up! I have you! You were saved, I was lost; but it is you yourself who have stepped voluntarily into the jaws of the crocodile, because she groaned after she had roared. I am consoled, since my death is my revenge! You are caught in the trap, *amigo*, and I shall have a human companion among the fishes in the lake.'

"'Ah! traitor!' I cried, writhing, 'this is how you thank me for having tried to save you, is it?'

"'Yes,' he shouted; 'I know that I could save myself by you, but I prefer to have you die with me. I prefer your death to my life. Come!'

"His bronzed and callous hands grasped mine with superhuman strength; his eyes flamed, his mouth foamed; the strength which he had cried was leaving him only a moment ago had returned, augmented by rage and his longing for revenge; his feet clutched the perpendicular sides of the rock like two levers; and he sprang like a tiger from the root, which, entangled in his clothes, held him in spite of his efforts to break it. He bore his whole weight upon me, to drag me down the more quickly. Now and then he stopped to bite the root in rage, laughing horribly the while. He looked like some frightful demon of the cave seeking to draw down his victim into his palace of shade and darkness. One of my knees luckily had caught in a crevice of the rock; my arm was, as it were, tied about the tree of which I had hold; and I struggled against the clown's efforts with the strength which comes from the thought of self-preservation. Now and then I raised myself, and called with all my strength, 'Bug-Jargal!' But the rushing of the cascade and the remoteness of the cavern made me scarcely hope he could hear me.

"The dwarf, who had not expected such resistance, redoubled his furious pulling. I was beginning to lose my strength, although the struggle lasted a much shorter time than it takes to tell you about it. An insupportable pain was almost paralyzing my arm; my sight was growing dim; a lurid and confused glare came before my eyes; a roaring sound filled my ears; I heard the branch crack, ready to break; I heard the fiend laugh as he was about to fall; and it seemed as though the thundering whirlpool swept over me.

"Before completely giving way to exhaustion and despair, however, I thought I would try a last resort; I gathered my failing strength together, and cried again, 'Bug-Jargal!' A bark answered me. I knew it was Rask, and raised my eyes. Bug-Jargal and his dog were at the edge of the crevice! I do not know whether he had heard my voice, or if a feeling of anxiety had brought him back. He saw my danger at once.

"'Hold on firmly!' he cried.

"Habibrah, fearing I would be saved, cried out, foaming with rage: —

"'Come now! come!' and for a final effort he gathered together all his supernatural strength. My arm fell from around the tree. It was almost over with me, when suddenly I felt myself seized from behind; it was Rask. At a sign from his master he had sprung from the rift upon the platform, and had grasped me between his teeth, by my coat-tails. This unexpected help saved my life. Habibrah's strength was gone; I strove to wrench away my hand. His benumbed and stiffened fingers were forced to let go; the branch gave way; and as Rask pulled me back violently, the wretched dwarf fell down into the foam of the dark cascade, hurling after him a malediction which I did not hear, and which fell back upon him within the abyss.

"Such was the fate of my uncle's clown.

CHAPTER LV.

"The frightful scene, the mad struggle, its terrible end, had been too much for me. I was weak and almost unconscious, but Bug-Jargal's voice recalled me.

"'Brother,' he cried, 'hasten away from here! The sun will have set in half an hour. I will wait for you below. Follow Rask.'

"The cheering words brought back hope and strength and courage to me. I arose. The mastiff plunged quickly through the underground passage, I following; his yelping guided me through the dark. After several minutes, I saw daylight before me; and finally we reached the opening, where I could once more breathe freely. As I came out of the dark, damp vault, I remembered the dwarf's words as we had entered: —

"'Only one of us two shall return by this road.'

"His hope had been thwarted, but his prophecy had been fulfilled.

CHAPTER LVI.

"We reached the valley and Bug-Jargal. I threw myself into his arms, and leaned upon him, almost overpowered, wanting to ask him a thousand questions, but unable to speak.

"'Your wife, my sister,' said he, 'is safe. I took them to the camp of the whites, to a relative of yours, who is in command of the outposts; I wished to give myself up as a prisoner, that they might not sacrifice the ten heads which had answered for mine. Your relative told me to flee, and try and save you, that the ten blacks would not be killed unless you were, which fact Biassou would have announced by hoisting a black flag on the highest mountain. Then I ran, guided by Rask; and, thank Heaven, I reached you in time! You will live and I too!"

"He extended his hand, adding, —

"'Brother, are you satisfied?'

"I clasped him again in my arms; I implored him not to leave me, but to stay with me among the whites; I promised him an officer's rank in the colonial army. He interrupted me sternly.

"'Brother, have I asked you to enlist in mine?'

"I was silent, realizing my mistake. Then he said gayly, —

"'Come, let us go quickly, and see and reassure your wife.'

"This suggestion answered a pressing need of my heart; I rose, mad with joy, and we set out. The black knew the road; he walked before me, Rask followed."

D'Auverney paused, and looked sadly about him. The perspiration stood out in great drops on his forehead. He

covered his face with his hand. Rask watched him anxiously.

"Yes, you looked at me in just that way!" he murmured.

An instant later he sprang up, strongly agitated, and left the tent. The mastiff and the sergeant followed.

CHAPTER LVII.

"I'LL wager that we are approaching the climax!" cried Henry. "I shall really be sorry if anything happened to Bug-Jargal; what a fine man he was!"

Paschal raised his lips from the wicker bottle, saying, —

"For a dozen hampers of port, I should like to see the cocoanut which he emptied at a gulp."

Alfred, who had been humming a guitar accompaniment, stopped, and begged Lieutenant Henry to fasten his shoulder-straps; then he added: —

"The negro interests me intensely. Only I have not yet dared to ask d'Auverney if he knew the air from '*la hermosa de Padilla.*'"

"Biassou is much more remarkable," said Paschal; "his tar-wine was not worth very much, but the man knew what a Frenchman was at least. Had I been his prisoner, I would have let my mustache grow, in order that he might lend me some piastres on it, as the city of Goa did to the Portuguese captain. I tell you my creditors are more pitiless than Biassou."

"By the way, Captain, there are the four louis that I owe you!" cried Henry, throwing his purse to Paschal.

The captain looked astonished at his generous debtor, who might better have called himself his creditor. Henry hastened to continue, —

"Well, gentlemen, what do you think of the captain's story so far?"

"Faith," said Alfred, "I have not been listening very closely, but I will confess that I expected something more interesting from the dreamy d'Auverney. Then, it is a romance in prose, and I do not like prose romances; to

what tune is this one sung? In short, the story of Bug-Jargal wearies me; it is too long."

"You are right," said the aide-de-camp Paschal; "it is too long. If I had not had my pipe and my flask, I should have had a bad night of it. Besides, there are too many absurd parts in it. The idea, for instance, of that little deformed sorcerer — what's his name? *Habit-bas?* — the idea of his wishing to drown himself, in order to kill his enemy."

Henry interrupted him, laughing, —

"And in water, too, Captain Paschal. The most amusing thing to me during d'Auverney's story, was watching his lame dog raise his head every time he uttered the name *Bug-Jargal.*"

"In that," said Paschal, "he did exactly the opposite to what I have seen the old woman of Celadas do, when the preacher pronounced the name of Jesus; I went to church with a dozen fellows" —

The report of the sentinel's gun warned them of d'Auverney's return, and they all became silent. The captain walked about for a time with folded arms, and without speaking. Old Thadée, who had seated himself in a corner, looked at him sidewise, and tried to pretend that he was petting Rask, so that the captain might not notice his anxiety.

Finally d'Auverney resumed: —

CHAPTER LVIII.

"Rask followed us. The sun had already set behind the highest cliff in the valley; one lingering ray fell across it, and then vanished. The black trembled; he grasped my hand roughly.

"'Listen,' he said.

"A hollow sound, like the report of a cannon, echoed along the valley.

"'It is the signal!' exclaimed the negro sadly. Then, —

"'It was the report of a gun, was it not?'

"I nodded my head.

"With two bounds he was upon a high rock.

"I followed. He crossed his arms, and smiled sadly.

"'Do you see?' he asked.

"I looked where he pointed, and saw a great black flag on the peak, which he had pointed out to me after my interview with Marie, and the only one on which the sun still rested."

D'Auverney paused.

"I heard afterwards that Biassou had been in haste to start, and believing me dead, had ordered the flag raised before the return of the troops who were to kill me.

"Bug-Jargal stood with folded arms gazing at the black flag. Then he turned quickly, as though to step down from the rock.

"'God! God! my unhappy comrades!'

"He came back to me. 'Did you hear the report?' he asked. I did not answer.

"'Well, brother, it was the signal. They are marching them out already.'

"His head fell forward on his breast. He came still nearer to me.

"'Go back to your wife, brother; Rask will show you the way.'

"He whistled an African air; and the dog began to wag his tail, as though anxious to set out toward one point of the valley.

"Bug-Jargal took my hand, striving to smile; but he could not.

"'Farewell!' he cried, in a deep voice, then suddenly disappeared within the woods about us.

"I was petrified. The little I knew of all that had just taken place made me foresee every misfortune.

"Rask, seeing that his master was gone, sprang to the edge of the rock, wagging his head, with plaintive yelps. He returned, hanging his tail; his great eyes were wet; he watched me restlessly, then turned to where his master had disappeared, and barked and barked. I understood him; I felt the same fear as he did, and I followed as he sped on after Bug-Jargal. He would soon have been out of sight, although I ran as fast as I could, had he not from time to time stopped, as though to give me time to catch up to him. We crossed several valleys, and hills covered with woodland. At last" —

D'Auverney stopped. A sad despair was pictured on his face; he could hardly speak: —

"Go on, Thadée, I have no more strength than an old woman."

The old sergeant was no less moved than the captain, but he prepared to obey him.

"By your leave, since you wish it, Captain. I must tell you, my officers, that although Bug-Jargal, called Pierrot, was a great negro, very gentle, very strong, and brave, and the greatest soldier in the world, next to you, Captain, if you please, I was none the less angry with him, for which fact I will never forgive myself, although my captain has forgiven me for it. I was so angry, Captain, that after your death had been announced for the evening of the second day, I became violently enraged against the poor man; and it was with a

genuine and infernal pleasure that I told him that it would be he, or, in case of his defaulting, ten of his men, who would keep you company, and who would be shot 'in retaliation,' as they say. At this he said nothing; but an hour later he escaped through a great hole" —

D'Auverney made an impatient gesture. Thadée continued: —

"So be it! When we saw the great black flag on the mountain, as he had not returned, and which did not surprise us, by your leave, my officers, the signal was given, from the cannon, and I was ordered to lead out the ten negroes to the place of execution, called the *Bouche-du-grand-Diable* ('Mouth of the Great Devil'), about — but what does it matter how far it was from the camp? When we reached there, you know very well, gentlemen, it was not in order to set them free; so I had them bound, as is always done, and I began to make ready my company. Suddenly I looked up and saw the great negro, coming from the forest. My arms fell. He came running up out of breath.

"'I am here in time!' said he. 'How are you, Thadée?'

"'Yes, gentlemen, these were his only words; and he unbound his companions, while I stood there stupefied. Then, by your leave, Captain, there took place a generous struggle between the blacks and him, which should have lasted a while longer — No matter! Yes, I accuse myself; it was I who made them stop. He took the place of the blacks. Just then his great dog, poor Rask! sprang at my throat. He should have clung there an instant longer! But Pierrot raised his hand, and the poor dog let me go. Bug-Jargal, however, could not keep him from lying down at his feet. I thought then that you were dead, Captain. I was furious — I cried" —

"The sergeant raised his hand, looked at the captain, but could not utter the fatal words.

"Bug-Jargal fell — a ball broke the paw of his dog — ever since then, gentlemen (and the sergeant shook his head

sadly), he has been lame. I heard groans in the woods, and running in their direction I found you, Captain; you had been hit by a ball as you ran to save the great negro. Yes, Captain, you groaned; but it was for him! Bug-Jargal was dead! You, Captain, were carried to the camp; your wound was not as serious as his, for you recovered, thanks to the care of Madame Marie."

The sergeant stopped. D'Auverney continued in a sad and solemn voice: —

"Bug-Jargal was dead!"

Thadée lowered his head.

"Yes," he said; "and he had spared my life, and it was I who killed him!"

NOTE.

Most readers like to have some definite knowledge as to the fate of each of the personages in the story in which we have tried to interest them. With the wish to satisfy them on these points, we have looked into the after life of Captain Léopold d'Auverney, of his sergeant and his dog. The reader may perhaps remember that the captain's sad melancholy came from two causes, the death of Bug-Jargal, or Pierrot, and the death of his dear Marie, who was saved from the burning Fort Galifet only to perish a short time afterwards in the first fire at the Cape. As to the captain himself, we have discovered the following data.

On the day after a great battle, which was won by the soldiers of the French Republic over the Army of Europe, General-divisionary M ——, commander-in-chief, was alone in his tent, copying from the notes of his chief staff-officer the report of the victory, which was to be sent to the National Convention. An aide-de-camp had just told him that the representative sent by the people had asked to speak with him. The general hated these ambassadors in red caps, whom La Montagne deputed in the camps in order to degrade and destroy them, bribed informers, ordered by the hangmen to spy upon glory. But it would have been dangerous to refuse them admittance, especially after a victory. The bloody idol of those times loved illustrious victims; and the sacrificers of the peace of the Revolution were happy when they could, with one blow, cut off a head and a crown, — were it only one of thorns, like that of Louis XVI.; of flowers, like that of the young

girls of Verdun; or of laurel, like that of Custine and Andre Chénier. The general ordered that the representative be admitted.

After some ambiguous and limited congratulations on the recent triumph of the Republican army, the representative, approaching the general, said in a low tone, —

"This is not all, Citizen-General; it is not enough to conquer the enemy without, he must also be conquered within."

"What do you mean, Citizen-Representative?" asked the general, astonished.

"There is in your army," the commissary of the Convention answered mysteriously, "a captain, named Léopold d'Auverney; he serves in the Thirty-second Regiment; General, do you know him?"

"Yes, indeed!" returned the general. "I have just been reading a report from the adjutant-general, commander of the Thirty-second Regiment, concerning him. The Thirty-second found him an excellent captain."

"What, Citizen-General!" exclaimed the representative haughtily, "are you going to give him another rank?"

"I will not deny that such was my intention, Citizen-Representative."

The commissary imperiously interrupted the general.

"Victory blinds you, General M —— ! Take care what you do and what you say. If you warm in your breast the serpents of the people, you may tremble lest the people crush you in crushing the serpents! This Léopold d'Auverney is an aristocrat, a counter-revolutionist, a Royalist, a Feuillant, a Girondin. Public justice claims him. You must give him up instantly."

"The general replied coldly, —

"I cannot."

"What, you cannot!" cried the commissary with increasing anger. "Do you forget, General M ——, that mine is the only limitless power here? The Republic commands you, and 'you cannot!' Listen to me. I will, on account of your success, read you the note I have received about this d'Auverney, and which I must forward with him to the public accuser. It is an extract from a list of names which you will not wish to force me to complete with yours. Listen: —

"'Léopold Auverney (formerly *de*), captain of the Thirty-second Regiment, is convicted, *primo*, of having related, in a meeting of conspirators, a pretended counter-revolutionary story, tending to ridicule the principles of equality and liberty, and to praise the old ideas known under the names of *royalty* and *religion;* convicted, *secondo*, of having used expressions disapproved of by all good Republicans, to characterize various memorable events, notably the enfranchisement of the former

blacks of San Domingo; accused, *tertio*, of having constantly used the term *monsieur* (gentleman) in his story, and never the term *citoyen* (citizen); finally, *quarto*, to have, by the aforesaid story, openly conspired against the overthrow of the Republic to the advantage of the party of Girondins and Brissotists. He deserves death.' Well, General, what do you say to that? Shall you still protect this traitor? Do you still hesitate to deliver over to punishment this enemy of the country?"

"'This enemy of the country,'" replied the general, with dignity, "sacrificed himself for her. To the extract from your report, I will answer by one from mine. Now it is your turn to listen: 'Léopold d'Auverney, captain of the Thirty-second Regiment, won the last victory which our men gained. A formidable redoubt had been established by the combined forces; it was the key to the battle, it had to be taken. The death of the man who first attacked it was certain. Captain d'Auverney sacrificed himself; he took the redoubt, was killed there, and we won. Sergeant Thadée, of the Thirty-second, and a dog were found dead at his side. We would suggest to the National Convention to vote that Captain Léopold d'Auverney has served his country well.' You see, Representative," continued the general calmly, "the difference between our letters; we will each send a list to the Convention. The same name will occur on both. You denounce it as the name of a traitor, I uphold it as that of a hero; you consign him to disgrace, I to glory; you have a scaffold erected, I a monument; each one his own way. But it is fortunate that this brave soldier has escaped your punishment by dying in battle. Thank God! he whom you wish to kill is already dead. He did not wait for you."

The commissary, furious at seeing his conspiracy vanish with his conspirator, muttered between his teeth, —

"He is dead! That is a pity!"

The general heard the words, and cried indignantly, —

"Citizen-Representative of the people, there is still something left for you to do! Go and find the body of Captain d'Auverney among the rubbish of the redoubt. Who knows? Perhaps the enemy's bullets have saved the head of the corpse for the National Guillotine!"

Written in 1826.

THE LAST DAY OF A CONDEMNED MAN.

PREFACE.

THE only preface to the first editions of this work, published at first without the author's name, were the following lines: —

"There are two ways of accounting for the writing of this book: First, a bundle of torn, yellow papers was found, on which were written, in order, the last thoughts of a poor wretch; second, there was a man, a dreamer, who was given to studying nature for the sake of art. He was a philosopher perhaps, or a poet, I know not just what; but he took hold of this fancy, or rather he let it take hold of him, and he could rid himself of it only by putting it into a book.

"These are the two theories, and the reader may choose the one which pleases him the better."

At the time of the publication of the book, the author did not think it wise to say too much. He preferred to wait, and see if his views were understood. They were; and to-day he can unmask the political and social ideas which he wished to make popular in this innocent and clearly stated story. He declares, or rather he acknowledges frankly, that the *Last Day of a Condemned Man* is nothing more than a plea, direct or indirect as one pleases, for the abolishment of capital punishment. His idea was to make posterity see in his book, should they read it, not the special plea of such or such a convict, of such or such a criminal (which is always an easy and transient thing), but the general and permanent plea of all criminals, now and forever; it was the great right of humanity urged and pleaded by every voice before mankind, which is the highest court of appeals; it was the ultimate

principle, *abhorrescere a sanguine*, established before the existence of the criminal courts themselves; it was the sombre and fatal question which trembles at the foundation of every capital prosecution, under the triple thickness of pathos with which the bloody rhetoric of the people of the king is covered; it was the question of life and death, I say, naked, unclothed, freed from the sonorous subterfuge of the court-room, cruelly brought into the light, laid where it can and must be seen, and where it really is, in its rightful place, its horrible place, not in the court-room, but on the scaffold, not before the judge, but before the hangman.

This is what he aimed to do; and if posterity should ever grant him the glory of having accomplished it, and he hardly dares hope that it will, he would ask for no other crown.

He says, and he repeats it, that he works in the name of every possible prisoner, innocent or guilty, before every court, before every judge, every jury, and every feeling of justice. This book is dedicated to any and every judge. And that the plea may be as great as the cause, he had (and this is why the story was written as it is) to eliminate from the consideration of the subject the discussion of *remote cause* and *inevitable accident*, *particular case* and *special exception*, *precedent*, *mitigating circumstances*, *story*, *anecdote*, *issue*, and *title*; and limit it, if this is limiting, to pleading the condemned man's cause, whensoever he be condemned and whatsoever be his crime. Happy, if without other instrument than his idea, he has searched sufficiently to make a heart bleed under the *aes triplex* of a judge! Happy, if he has roused sympathy for those who believe themselves in the right! Happy, if by searching deep within the heart of the judge, he has occasionally succeeded in finding a man!

When the book appeared, three years ago, there were some who imagined that it was worth while to question if the idea was the author's. Some thought it was taken from an English book, others from an American. Strange mania, to look for the origin of things in a thousand places, and to make the

stream which runs through your street start from the mouths of the Nile! No! It was taken neither from an English nor an American nor a Chinese book. The author found the idea of *The Last Day of a Condemned Man* not in any book, — he is not in the habit of going so far for his ideas; but he found it where you all may find it, where, perhaps, you have found it, (for who in his own mind has not written or dreamed of *The Last Day of a Condemned Man?*) on the public Place, on the Place de Grève. It was there that, passing by one day, he found the dread idea lying in a pool of blood, beneath the crimson arms of the guillotine.

Ever after, each time that at the will of the fatal Thursdays, in the Court of Appeals, one of the days arrived when the cry of a death-sentence was heard in Paris; every time that the author heard beneath his windows those hoarse criers calling the spectators to La Grève, — every time, the dread thought came back to him, took possession of him, filled his mind with gendarmes and hangmen, and crowds of spectators; explained to him hour after hour the last agonies of the wretched sufferer, while he confesses, while his hair is cut off, while his hands are bound; called upon him, the poor poet, to tell it all to the world, which goes on unmindful, attending to its own affairs, while this frightful thing is taking place; urged him, begged him, shook him, snatched away from him his humorous verses if he happened to be writing, and killed them before they were half begun; stopped all his work, intercepted itself between him and all else, surrounded and beset him on all sides. It was a torture, — a torture which began with the dawn, and which lasted, like that of the wretch who was being murdered at that very moment, until *four o'clock.* Only then, when the *ponens caput expiravit,* announced by the fatal voice of the clock, was the author able to breathe again, and find some peace of mind. Finally, one day, — it was, he thinks, the one after the execution of Ulbach, — he began to write this book. From that moment he found comfort. When one of those

public crimes, called *legal executions*, was committed, his conscience told him that he was not conjointly liable; and he no longer felt that drop of blood on his forehead which spurted from La Grève upon the head of every member of the social community.

But this was not enough. To wash one's hands is good, but to stop the flow of the blood is better.

He knows no higher, no holier, no nobler aim than this, — to strive for the abolishment of capital punishment. And it is from his heart that he adheres to the wishes and the efforts of the generous men of every nation, who for several years have worked to overthrow the gallows, the only tree which is not uprooted by the Revolution. It is with joy that it comes his turn, his, the poor poet, to apply his axe, and enlarge as much as possible the gash made by Beccaria, sixty years ago, on the old gallows which has stood for so many centuries over Christendom.

We have said that the scaffold is the only thing which Revolutionists do not demolish. It is seldom indeed that a revolution spares human life; and coming, as it does, to prune, cut, hack, and behead society, capital punishment is one of the instruments which it is most loath to give up.

We will admit, however, that if ever a revolution seemed to us worthy and capable of abolishing capital punishment, it was the Revolution of July. It seems to belong to the kindest popular movement of modern times to blot out the barbarous punishment of Louis XI., Richelieu, and Robespierre, and to inscribe on the face of the law the sacredness of human life. 1830 deserved to break the chopper of '93.

We hoped so for an instant. In August, 1830, there was so much generosity, such a spirit of gentleness and progress among the people, and their hearts were looking forward to such a bright future, that it seemed as if, from the very first, capital punishment were abolished from a sense of justice, and

by a tacit and general consent, like the other evils which had annoyed us. The people had just made a bonfire of the rubbish of the ancient *régime.* These were the bloody rags. We thought they had been burned in the pile, like the others. And for several weeks, confident and credulous, we trusted in the future, and in the sacredness of life as in the sacredness of liberty.

Scarcely had two months elapsed before an attempt was made to dissolve the sublime legal Utopia of César Bonesana.

Unfortunately the attempt was awkward, clumsy, almost hypocritical, and was made in other interests than the general one.

In October of the year 1830, we remember, that a few days after the Chamber had set aside, by order of the day, the proposition to bury Napoleon under the column, every member began to cry and scream. The question of capital punishment was again brought on the *tapis,* on which occasion we were going to say something, when it seemed that every fibre of every lawyer was seized with a sudden and wonderful pity for any one who spoke or groaned, or raised his hands to heaven. Capital punishment, great God! what a horrible thing! One old attorney-general grew pale in his scarlet robe, he who all his life had eaten bread that had been soaked in the blood of the requisitors, and all at once raised a piteous cry, and called the gods to witness that he was indignant at the guillotine. For two days the court-house was filled with crying haranguers. It was a lamentation, a myriology, a concert of lugubrious psalms, a "*Super flumina Babylonis,*" a *Stabat Mater Dolorosa,* a great symphony in C, with choruses sung by the entire orchestra of orators who occupied the front row of benches in the chamber, and made such beautiful speeches on great occasions. One came with his bass, another with his falsetto. Nothing was wanting. The affair could not have been more pitiful or pathetic. The night session, in particular, was as tender, paternal, and heartrending as the

fifth act of Lachaussée. The kind public, which understood nothing of it, had tears in its eyes.[1]

What, then, was the question? The abolishment of capital punishment?

Yes and no.

These are the facts.

Four society men, men of good social standing, such as one meets in a drawing-room, and with whom perhaps one exchanges civilities, — four of these men, I say, had attempted, in the high political circles, one of those bold deeds which Bacon calls *crimes*, and which Machiavelli calls *enterprises*. But whichever they are, the law, cruel to all, punishes them with death. And the four gentlemen were taken prisoners, captives of the law, and were guarded by three hundred tricolored cockades beneath the beautiful *ogives* of Vincennes. What was to be done, and how go about it? You can readily see that it was impossible to send to La Grève, in a wagon, ignobly bound with great ropes, and sitting back to back with the officer whose title we must even refrain from mentioning, four men like you or me, four *society men*. If there were a mahogany guillotine — !

Well! There was nothing to do but to abolish capital punishment!

Thereupon the Chamber set to work to do it.

Note, gentlemen, that even yesterday you discussed abolishing this theoretical, imaginary, foolish, poetical Utopia. Remember that this is not the first time we have tried to call your attention to the prison-wagon, and the thick ropes, and the horrible scarlet machine, and that it is strange that this hideous apparatus all at once springs before your eyes.

Bah! This is indeed the question! It is not on your account, People, that we abolish capital punishment, but on

[1] We do not pretend to look with the same scorn upon *all* that was said at this time in the Chamber. Now and then, kind and generous words were spoken. We, like every one else, applauded the dignified and simple speech of Monsieur de Lafayette, and at another time the remarkable words of Monsieur Villemain.

our own account, as deputies, and men who may in time be ministers. We do not want the dreadful guillotine to kill our higher classes. We overthrow it. So much the better, if that accommodates every one; but we have thought only of ourselves. Ucalégon burns. We extinguish the fire. Quick, suppress the hangmen, blot out the law.

Thus it is that an alloy of egoism alters and changes the most beautiful social combinations. It is the black vein in the white marble; it runs everywhere, and suddenly appears every moment beneath the chisel. Your statue must be done over.

Surely it is not necessary for us to state here, that we are not of those who demanded the heads of the four ministers. As soon as these unfortunate men were imprisoned, our indignant anger, roused by their criminal attempts, changed, as did that of the world at large, into a profound pity. We remembered the education of some of them, the slightly developed brain of their leader, a fanatical and obstinate relapser of the conspiracies of 1804, grown gray before his time under the damp shade of the state-prisons; we remembered the fatal necessity of their common position, the impossibility of stopping on that rapid slide upon which the monarchy had thrown itself headlong, the 8th of August, 1829, the influence of the royal person, which we did not, until then, sufficiently realize, and especially the dignity spread by one of them, like a purple cloak, over their misfortune. We are of those who wished most sincerely that their lives might be spared, and who were ready to devote themselves toward this end. If ever, by any impossibility, it should happen that their scaffold was erected some day on the Place de Grève, we will not doubt, — and if it is an illusion, we wish to keep it, — we will not doubt but that there would be a riot to overthrow it, and that he who writes these lines would be in this righteous riot. For, it must be admitted also, that at a time of social crises, of all the scaffolds, the political one is the most abominable, the most wicked, the most harmful, the most necessary to have

abolished. This kind of guillotine takes root in the pavement, and in a short time pushes forth its shoots at every point.

At the time of a revolution, look out for the first head that falls. It whets the people's appetite.

We were then personally in accord with those who wanted to save the four ministers, and for every reason, sentimental as well as political. Only we would have preferred the Chamber to choose another time for proposing the abolishment of capital punishment.

If this longed-for abolishment had been suggested, not on account of the four ministers who had fallen from the Tuileries to Vincennes, but on account of one of the poor fellows whom you hardly notice when they pass you in the street, to whom you do not speak, whose dusty elbow you instinctively avoid, — the poor fellows who in childhood ran ragged and barefooted in the mud of the streets, shivering on the wharves in winter, warming themselves at the vent-holes of the kitchen of Monsieur Véfour with whom you dine, routing out here and there a crust of bread from the ash-heaps, which they have to wipe off before eating, scraping the stream all day long with a nail to find a liard, and with only the free show of the King's *fête* and the executions at La Grève, the only other free show, for amusement; poor devils, whom hunger drives to theft, and theft to what comes after; children disinherited by a harsh society, whom the house of correction takes at the age of twelve, the galleys at eighteen, and the scaffold at forty; poor wretches whom you could make good, moral, and useful by means of a school and a workshop, but whom you do not know what to do with, as you turn them over like a useless bundle, now on the red ant-hill of Toulon, now in the still enclosure of Clamart, cutting off life after having taken away their liberty, — if it were in regard to one of these men that you had proposed to abolish capital punishment, oh, then your session would indeed have been good and great, holy, majestic, and to be venerated. Since the august fathers of Thirty, who invited the heretics to their

council in the name of God's entrails, *per viscera Dei*, because they hoped for their conversion, *quoniam sancta synodus sperat hæreticorum conversionem*, never did an assembly of men present to the world a more sublime, more illustrious, and more pitiful spectacle. It has always belonged to the truly great and strong to care for the weak and feeble. A council of Brahmins would be beautiful taking up the cause of the *paria;* and in this case the cause of the *paria* was the cause of the people. By abolishing capital punishment on this account, and without waiting until you are interested in the question, you would accomplish more than a political act, you would do a social act.

But you have not even accomplished a political act, in trying to abolish it, not in order to abolish it, but in order to save four wretched ministers who put their hands upon state policies!

What happened? As you were not sincere, the populace became defiant. When they saw that you wished to fool them, they grew angry against the whole question, and, strange fact! they took sides and argued for that capital punishment, the whole burden of which they supported. It was your awkwardness that brought them to this. By not being perfectly frank, you compromised the question for a long time. You were playing a comedy, and they hissed it.

But some wits had the kindness to take this farce seriously. Immediately after the famous session, the order had been given to the attorney-generals by a keeper of the seals, an honest man, to suspend all capital punishment indefinitely. Apparently it was a great step. Those opposed to capital punishment breathed again. But the illusion did not last long.

The trial of the ministers was brought to a close. Some sentence, I do not know what, was pronounced. The four lives were spared. Ham was chosen as the happy medium between death and liberty. These various arrangements once made, all fear vanished in the minds of the statesmen; and

with the fear, humanity disappeared. It was no longer a question of abolishing capital punishment; and once without need of her, Utopia became Utopia again; theory, theory; poetry, poetry.

There always had been in the prisons, however, some unfortunate convicts who, for five or six months, had walked about in the yards, breathing the air, calm, sure of living, taking their respite for their pardon. But wait.

The hangman had had a great fright. The day when he had heard our lawmakers speak of humanity, philanthropy, progress, he thought himself lost; and he hid, the wretch, he cowered down under his guillotine, ill at ease in the July heat, like a night-bird in daylight, trying to make himself forgotten, stopping up his ears, and not daring to breathe. He was not seen for six months. But he had been listening; and he had not heard the Chamber utter his name, nor any of those great expressions of which he was so afraid. No more commentaries on the "Treatise on Crimes and Punishment." They were occupied with entirely different things, of great importance, such as a parochial road, a subsidy for the Opera Comique, or a payment of one hundred thousand francs on an apoplectic budget of fifteen hundred millions. No one thought of him, the hangman. Seeing which, he becomes calm, he puts his head out of his hole, and looks about on every side; he takes one step, then two, like the mouse in La Fontaine; then he ventures out suddenly from under his scaffold; he springs up, mends it, restores it, polishes, caresses it, makes it work and shine, and sets about oiling the old rusty machine that has become out of order through disuse. All at once he turns, seizes by the hair, from the first prison he reaches, one of the poor wretches who have been counting on living, drags him out, strips him, binds him down, and — behold! the executions are begun again!

All this is horrible, but it is history.

Yes, the unhappy captives had a respite of six months; but their punishment was gratuitously aggravated in this way.

Then, for no reason or necessity, without knowing why, *for pleasure alone*, the respite was revoked one fine morning, and all these human beings were coldly submitted to a systematic execution. Well, great God! I ask you, what harm would it have done us had they lived? Is there not enough air in France for every one to breathe?

One day a miserable clerk of the chancellor, it matters not who, rose from his chair, saying: "Come! no one thinks any more about the abolishment of capital punishment. It is time to return to the guillotine!" The heart of that man must have been made of stone.

Moreover, never have executions been accompanied by more atrocities than since the revocation of the respite of July. Never has the story of La Grève been more revolting, never has it better proved the wickedness of capital punishment. This increased cruelty is the just punishment of the men who brought back the law of blood with a vengeance. May they be punished by their own deeds! It would only be right.

We must cite here two or three examples of the frightful and impious acts connected with some executions. It would make the wives of the public prosecutors nervous. A woman sometimes has a conscience.

In the South, toward the close of last September (we are not quite sure of the place, day, or the name of the condemned man; but they can all be found if proof is needed, and we think that it was at Pamiers) — toward the close of September, a man was found in prison, quietly playing at cards. He was told that he must die in two hours, which announcement made him tremble in every limb, for he had been forgotten for six months, and had grown to think that he would not have to die. He was shaved, bound, confessed; then they took him in a wheelbarrow between four gendarmes, through the crowd, to the place of execution. Up to this point nothing could have been simpler. It was the usual way of doing such things. When they reached the scaffold, the hangman received him from the priest, led him aside, bound him to the

seesaw, *put him into the oven*, so to speak (here I use the slang expression), then let down the chopper. The heavy iron triangle rose with difficulty, fell with jerks into its grooves, and (here the horrors begin) mangled the man, but did not kill him. The victim gave a fearful shriek. The hangman, disconcerted, raised the chopper and let it fall a second time. Again it cut the victim's neck, but did not behead him. He gave a fearful groan, and the crowd groaned too. The hangman once more raised the chopper, hoping the third time for success. Not so. The third blow brought out a third river of blood from the victim's neck, but did not cut off his head. Let us abridge the story. The chopper rose and fell five times; five times it struck the man's neck, five times he shrieked out beneath the blow, raising his head, and crying for mercy! The indignant populace seized some stones, and began throwing them at the hangman. The latter fled under the guillotine, and crouched down behind the horses of the gendarmes. But this is not all. The victim, seeing that he was alone on the scaffold, rose and stood there, a fearful sight, dripping with blood, trying to hold up his half-severed head, which hung down over his shoulder, and imploring them with feeble moans to untie him. The people, filled with pity, were on the point of calling the gendarmes, and coming to the aid of the unhappy wretch who five times had suffered his death-sentence, when a valet of the hangman, a young man of twenty, mounted the scaffold, told the victim to turn over that he might unbind him, and then, taking advantage of the dying man's defenceless position, he jumped on his back, and began with difficulty to hack, with a butcher's knife, at what still remained of his neck. All this happened. All this was seen. It is all true.

According to law, a judge should have been present at the execution. He could have put a stop to it all by a gesture. What was he doing, then, leaning back in his carriage, while a man was being massacred? What was he doing, this punisher of murderers, while in broad daylight, under his

very eyes, under his horse's nostrils, under his carriage-window, a man was being murdered ?

And the judge was not put on trial ! and the hangman was not put on trial ! and no court made inquiries about that monstrous violation of every law on the sacred person of one of God's creatures !

In the seventeenth century, in the barbarous epoch of the criminal law, under Richelieu, under Christopher Fouquet, when Monsieur de Chalais was put to death before le Bouffay of Nantes by a clumsy soldier, — who, instead of a sword-thrust, gave him thirty-four blows [1] with a cooper's adze, — at least this appeared irregular to the Parliament of Paris : there was an investigation and a trial ; and although Richelieu was not punished, although Christopher Fouquet was not punished, the soldier was. An injustice, no doubt, but underneath everything it was right.

In this case, nothing was done. The thing occurred after July, at a time of peace and great progress, a year after the celebrated lamentation of the Chamber on capital punishment. Well ! The fact passed absolutely unobserved. The Paris paper published it as an anecdote. No one troubled himself about it. They merely knew that the guillotine had been purposely put out of order by some one who *wished to injure the executor of noble deeds.* It was the hangman's valet, who had been dismissed from service by his employer, and who avenged himself in this way.

It was only a trick. Let us continue.

At Dijon, three months ago, a woman was to be executed, (a woman !). This time also the knife of Doctor Guillotine did poor service. The head was not completely severed ; so the hangman's valets took hold of the woman's feet, and in spite of the victim's shrieks, they pulled and tugged, and finally succeeded in jerking the head from the body.

At Paris, we return to the time of the secret executions.

[1] La Porte says twenty-two, but Aubery thirty-four. De Chalais shrieked until the twentieth.

As they have not dared to behead on La Grève since July, being cowards and afraid, this is what is done. They recently took from Bicêtre a man who was condemned to die, Desandrieux by name, I think; he was placed in a sort of basket drawn on two wheels, closed on all sides, locked and bolted; then, a gendarme in front and a gendarme at the rear, with little noise and no crowd, the basket was placed on the deserted square of Saint-Jacques. It was then eight o'clock in the morning, scarcely day, but a guillotine had been newly erected for the public, some dozen or more little boys who clustered on the piles of stones about the unlooked-for machine; quickly they dragged the man from the basket, and without giving him time to breathe, stealthily, slyly, shamefully, they cut off his head. That, they call a public and solemn act of justice. Infamous irony!

What do the people of the king understand by the word "civilization"? To what have we come? Justice debased by stratagem and fraud! The law by compromises! Monstrous!

It is, indeed, a fearful thing for society to treat a man condemned to die as though he were a traitor!

But let us be just; the execution was not entirely secret. In the morning, on the cross-ways of Paris, they shouted and sold, as usual, the death-sentence. It seems that there are people who make their living in this way. You undertsand what I mean, do you not? From an unfortunate man's crime, from his punishment, his agony, his tortures, a commodity is made, a paper which they sell for one sou. Can you imagine anything more hideous than this sou corroded with blood? Who is there who would pick it up?

These are enough facts, and too many. And are they not all horrible?

What have you to say in favor of capital punishment?

We ask the question seriously; and we ask it in order to obtain an answer; we put it to those who are well-versed in criminal law, not to literary haranguers. We know that

there are those who take the good of capital punishment as a text for a parody like any other theme. There are others who advocate capital punishment only because they hate such or such an one who opposes it. For them it is a quasi-literary question, a question of persons, of proper names. These are the envious, who are as far from being good lawyers as great artists. Joseph Grippas are no nearer to the Filangieri, than the Torregiani to the Michelangelos, and the Scudérys to the Corneilles.

It is not to them that we speak, but to the men of law, properly so-called, to the logicians, to the reasoners, to those who like capital punishment for its beauty, its goodness, its mercy.

Now let them give their reasons.

Those who judge and condemn say that capital punishment is necessary. In the first place, because they must remove from society one who has already harmed it, and who can harm it again. If this is all, life-imprisonment would suffice. Of what use is death? You say that one can escape from a prison? Make your patrol better. If you do not trust in iron bars, how do you dare to have menageries?

No hangman is needed where the jailer is enough.

But, they say, society must avenge itself; society must punish. Neither the one nor the other. To avenge belongs to the individual; punishment, to God.

Society is between the two. Punishment is above her; vengeance, beneath. She uses nothing so great or so small. She should not "punish to avenge herself;" she should "*correct to make better.*" Transform the formula of those versed in criminal law into this, and we would understand it and abide by it.

The third and last reason is left, the theory of example. Examples must be made! We must frighten, by the sight of the fate reserved for criminals, those who are tempted to follow in their footsteps! That is almost word for word the eternal phrase of which every requisitory of the five hundred

platforms of France are only more or less sonorous variations. Well! We deny, in the first place, that it is an example. We deny that the sight of punishment produces the desired effect. Far from edifying the people, it demoralizes them, it destroys their every feeling, and therefore their every virtue. There are many proofs, but our argument would be overcrowded if we were to cite them. We will mention merely one fact among a thousand, because it is the latest. It occurred ten days previous to the time we are writing. It was March 5th, the last day of the carnival. At Saint-Pol, immediately after the execution of an incendiary named Louis Camus, a group of masked men came and danced around the still reeking scaffold. So, make examples! The Mardi-Gras will laugh in your face!

If, in spite of experience, you still hold to your usual theory of example, then bring back the sixteenth century, be really formidable; bring back the various modes of punishment, bring back Farinacci, bring back the cross-examining juries; bring back the gallows, the wheel, the funeral-pile, the strappado (rack), the cutting-machine, the quartering, the ditch in which people were buried alive, the vat in which they were boiled alive; bring back to every street in Paris, as though it were an open shop among others, the hideous butcher's stall of the hangman, constantly covered with quivering flesh. Bring back Montfaucon, with its sixteen pillars of stone, its rough sessions, its caves of bones, its motes, its hooks, its chains, its carcasses, its tower of plaster dotted with ravens, its branching gallows, and the odor of dead bodies that the north-east wind wafts in large gusts across the entire Faubourg du Temple. Bring back in its permanence and power this gigantic penthouse of the Paris hangman. Yes! Here is an example indeed. Here is capital punishment that is understood. Here is a system of punishment of some importance. There is something horrible in it, and terrible too.

Or, do as is done in England. In England, which is a commercial country, a smuggler is arrested on the coast of Dover;

he is arrested *as an example*, and *as an example* he is left hanging to the gallows; but as the bad air spoils the body, the latter is carefully wrapped in linen which is coated with tar, that it may not have to be renewed very often. O land of economy! To tar those who are hanged!

But, nevertheless, this is somewhat logical. It is the most humane way of understanding the theory of example.

But do you really, seriously believe that you make an example when you wretchedly slaughter a poor man in the most deserted spot of the outside boulevards? On the Grève, in broad daylight, it may pass; but on the square at Saint-Jacques! At eight o'clock in the morning! Who is passing there? Who ever goes by there? Who knows that you are killing a man? For whom is it an example? For the trees of the boulevard apparently.

Do you not see that your public executions are done stealthily? Do you not see that you hide yourselves? That you are afraid and ashamed of your deed? That you stammer absurdly over your *discite justitiam moniti?* That at heart you are troubled, abashed, restless, less sure of being right, won over by the general doubt, that you are cutting off heads mechanically, without knowing very well what you are doing? Do you not feel in your innermost heart that you have at least lost the moral and social idea of the mission of blood which your predecessors, the old lawmakers, carried out with a quiet conscience? At night, do you not turn your head over on your pillow oftener than they? Others before you have advocated capital punishment; but they believed they were in the right, that it was just and good. Jouvenel des Ursins thought himself a judge; Élie de Thorrette thought himself a judge; Laubardemont, La Reynie, and Laffemas considered themselves judges; you, in your innermost soul, are not sure that you are not assassins!

You leave the Grève for Saint-Jacques, the crowd for solitude, daylight for twilight. You do not carry on openly what you do. You hide, I tell you!

Every reason for capital punishment, then, is overthrown. Every syllogism of the platform is set at naught, all the shavings of a *requisition* are swept away and reduced to ashes. The slightest touch of logic destroys all poor reasoning.

Let the people of the king no longer come and ask heads from us as jurymen, from us as men, calling on us, in a soft voice, in the name of the society to be protected, the public prosecution to be assured, the examples to be made.

It is all mere rhetoric, bombast, nothing! A prick of a pin on these hyperboles, and you bring down the swelling. Beneath this soft-sounding talk, you find only hardness of heart, cruelty, barbarity, the desire to show one's zeal, the necessity of gaining one's salary. Keep silent, mandarins! Beneath the judge's velvet paw are felt the nails of the hangman.

It is hard to think in cold blood of what a criminal public prosecutor is. He is a man who makes his living by sending others to the scaffold. He is the official purveyor of places like La Grève. He is a gentleman who has some pretension to style and learning; who is a good speaker, or thinks he is; who can recite a Latin verse when necessary, or two, before carrying out a death-sentence; who strives after effect; who interests his *amour-propre*, O misery! where are involved the lives of others; who has his own models, his desperate types to copy, his classics, his Bellart, his Marchangy, as one poet has Racine or another Boileau. In an argument, he takes the side of the guillotine; this is his *rôle*, his province. His requisitory is his literary work; he embellishes it with metaphors, he perfumes it with quotations, it must be beautiful for the audience, and pleasing to the ladies. He has his baggage of commonplaces still new for the province, his fine points of elocution, his expressions, his literary style.

He hates the proper word almost as much as do our tragic poets of Delille's school. Do not fear that he will call things by their name, pooh! For any idea of nudity to which you may object he has a complete disguise of epithets and adjec-

tives. He makes Monsieur Sanson presentable. He glosses over the chopper. He stumps the seesaw. He twists the red basket into a paraphrase. You no longer know what it is. It is sweet-sounding and decent. Can you picture him at night, in his office, composing at his ease, and to the best of his ability, the harangue which will raise a scaffold in six weeks? Do you see him sweating with blood and perspiration to fit the head of an accused man into the most fatal article of the code of law? Do you see him cutting off a wretch's head with a poorly made law? See how he inserts into a mess of tropes and synecdoches two or three poisonous texts, in order to express and extract at great pains the death of a man. Is it not true that while he writes, he probably has the hangman crouching at his feet, beneath his table, in the dark; and that he stops writing from time to time to say to him, like a master to his dog, "Lie still there! Lie still! You shall have your bone"?

In his private life this public man may be an honest fellow, a good father, a good son, a kind husband and friend, as all the epithets of Père-Lachaise read.

Let us hope that the day is at hand when the law will abolish these mournful duties. The atmosphere of our civilization alone should use capital punishment.

One is sometimes tempted to believe that the advocates of capital punishment have not carefully reflected on what it is. But weigh in the scales of some crime this exorbitant right which society takes upon herself to remove, what she has not given, this punishment, this most irreparable of irreparable punishments!

Of two cases this is one: —

The man whom you kill has no family, no relatives, no friends. In this case he has had no education, no instruction, neither care for his mind nor for his heart; then, by what right do you kill this poor orphan? You punish him because in his childhood he crept on the ground without help and without a protector! You ascribe to him, as a forfeit, the

isolation in which you have left him. You make a crime of his misfortune! No one taught him to know what he was doing. The man is ignorant. His fault is in his destiny, not in him. You kill an innocent man. Or, the man has a family; and then do you think that the blow by which you kill him hurts him alone? that his father, his mother, his children will not be disgraced? No. In killing him, you behead his whole family. And here, again, you kill innocent beings.

Awkward and blind penalty which, turn where it may, kills the innocent!

Imprison this man, this criminal with a family. In his cell he can still work for his own. But how can he provide for them in the depths of the tomb? And can you think without shuddering of what will become of his little boys, his little girls, whose father, and consequently their bread, you take away? Are you counting on this family from which to supply, after fifteen years, the galleys from the boys, the low music-hall from the girls? Oh, the poor little innocents!

In the colonies, when a slave receives capital punishment, a thousand francs indemnity are given to the man's master. What! you indemnify the master, and not the family! Here, again, do you not take a man from those who own him? Is he not, by a more sacred right than that of the slave to the master, the property of his father, his wife, his children?

We have already convicted your law of assassination. Now, here it is convicted of robbery.

Still another point. Do you think of the man's soul? Do you know its condition? Do you dare to despatch it so freely? Formerly, at least, the people had some faith; at the final moment the feeling of religion that was in the air softened the most hard-hearted; a victim was at the same time a penitent; religion opened one life to him as society closed the other; every soul had a knowledge of God; the

scaffold was but the outer gate of heaven. But what hope do you place on the scaffold, now that the mass has no more faith? now that every religion is attacked by the dry-rot, like the old ships which lie unheeded in our ports, and which once discovered, perhaps, worlds? now that little children ridicule God? By what right do you undertake something in which you yourselves doubt the dark souls of your condemned, such souls as Voltaire and Monsieur Pigault-Lebrun have made them? You deliver them into the hands of the priest of the prison, an excellent old man, no doubt; but does he believe, and will he make them believe? Does he not make drudgery of his sublime task? Do you consider him a priest, this good man who jostles against the hangman in the wagon? A writer of soul and talent has said before us: "*It is a horrible thing to keep the hangman, after having sent away the confessor!*"

Those, no doubt, are nothing but "sentimental reasons," some scornful people may say whose logic comes only from their head. To our mind these are the best. We often prefer reasons of sentiment to reasons of judgment. Moreover, the two are always connected; remember that. "*The Treatise on Crimes*" is grafted upon the "*Spirit of the Law.*" Montesquieu engendered Beccaria.

Reason is on our side, feeling is on our side, experience is on our side. In the model states where capital punishment is abolished, the number of capital crimes decreases year after year. Think of this.

However, we do not ask for a sudden and absolute abolishment of capital punishment at once, as was so thoughtlessly advocated by the Chamber of Deputies. On the contrary, we desire every precaution and all possible prudence. Moreover, we seek not merely the abolishment of capital punishment, we want a complete change of the punishment in all its forms, from the highest to the lowest, from the lock to the chopper; and time is an element which should enter into such an undertaking, in order that it may be well done. So, on

this subject, we hope to develop the system of ideas which we consider practicable. But aside from the partial abolishment in the case of counterfeit money, incendiary, so-called robberies, etc., we ask that from now on, in every capital question, the president put this question to the jury: "Was the accused moved by passion or by interest?" and that in case of the jury's replying, "The accused acted from passion," that he be not condemned to death. This, at least, would spare us some revolting executions. Ulbach and Debacker would be saved. Othello would no longer be guillotined.

Furthermore, that one may not be deceived, this question of capital punishment is developing daily. Before long all society will think as we do.

Let the most obstinate criminal lawyers pay attention to the fact that, for a century, capital punishment has been moderating. It is almost a mild thing now, which shows it is growing weak, and feeble, and approaching death. Torture has disappeared. The wheel has gone. The gallows has gone. Strange fact that the guillotine is a step toward progression.

Monsieur Guillotine was a philanthropist.

Yes, the horrible, voracious Thémis, with her long teeth, the Thémis of Farinace and Vouglaus, Delancre and Isaac Loisel, Oppède and Machauêt, is growing weak. She is wasting away and dying.

La Grève wants her no more. La Grève wants to reinstate herself. The old drinker of blood acted nobly in July. She wants now to lead a better life, and to prove herself worthy of her last beautiful act. She, who for three centuries has been prostituted to every scaffold, is covered with shame. She blushes at her old career. She wishes to forget her evil name. She repels the hangman. She washes her pavement.

Even now capital punishment is carried on outside of Paris. And let us emphasize the fact here, that to go outside of Paris is to go beyond civilization.

The symptoms all appear to be favorable to us. It seems, too, that this hideous machine is disheartened and glum, this monster of wood and iron, which is to Guillotine what Galatea is to Pygmalion. Looked at from one standpoint, the fearful executions which we have described above are good signs. The guillotine hesitates. She fails to strike. The old scaffold for capital punishment is out of order.

The infamous machine will leave France, we are sure; and if God is willing, she will leave it limping, for we shall try and give her some hard blows.

Let her seek hospitality elswhere, from some barbarous people; not in Turkey, which is growing civilized, nor among the savages, who do not want her (the Parliament of Otahiti has just abolished capital punishment); but let her descend several more rounds of the ladder of civilization; let her go to Spain or to Russia.

The social edifice of the past rests on three columns, — the priest, the king, and the hangman. Long ago a voice cried: "*The gods will it!*" Later a voice shouted: "*The kings will it!*" It is time now for a third voice to cry: "*The hangman wills it!*"

Thus the ancient structure of society will fall, stone after stone; thus Providence will complete the crumbling of the past.

To those who regret the gods, we may therefore say, "God remains." To those who regret the laws, "The country remains." To those who regret the hangman, we have nothing to say.

Nor will order disappear with the hangman; do not think this. The arch of future society will not fall for not having this hideous keystone. Civilization is nothing but a series of successive changes. Which one are you going to help? The change of punishment. The gentle law of Christ will penetrate our laws after a while, and will shine through them. Crime will be looked upon as a malady; and it will have its physicians in place of your judges, its hospi-

tals instead of your prisons. Liberty and health will be one. They will pour balm and oil where the iron and fire have left scars. It will be simple and sublime. The cross will take the place of the gallows. That is all.

March 15, 1832.

THE LAST DAY OF A CONDEMNED MAN.

A COMEDY.

(*Apropos of a Tragedy.*[1])

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MADAME DE BLINVAL.
A CHEVALIER.
ERGASTE.
A WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS.
A PHILOSOPHER.
A STOUT GENTLEMAN.
A THIN GENTLEMAN.
LADIES.
A LACKEY.

A Drawing-room.

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS (reading).

" Upon the morrow steps were heard within the forest-glade;
A dog barked low beside the stream; and when the little maid
Returned, alas ! her bower to find, her heart was filled with fear;
For o'er the ancient citadel sad groans assailed her ear;
And never more, oh, gentle maid! oh, gentle maid Isaure!
Shall sing thy minstrel-lover true upon his sweet mandore."

THE ENTIRE AUDIENCE.

Bravo ! Charming ! Ravishing ! (Applause.)

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

There is an indefinable mystery in the closing words which brings tears to one's eyes.

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS (modestly).

The climax is veiled.

[1] We think that we should reprint here the following preface in dialogue, which accompanied the fourth edition of *The Last Day of a Condemned Man.* In reading it, one must remember in the midst of what political, moral, and literary troubles the first editions of the book were published (edition of 1832).

THE CHEVALIER (shaking his head).

Mandore, minstrel, there is romanticism in that!

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS.

Yes, sir; but reasonable and true romanticism. What can you expect? We must make some concessions.

THE CHEVALIER.

Concessions! concessions! That is how one loses style. I would give all the romantic stanzas that have ever been written for this one quatrain: —

"From Pinde and Cythèra teasing,
Did Sir Bernard discover,
That Saturday, the Art of Lover,
Would sup a' the Art of Pleasing!"

There is true poetry! The art of Loving supping on Saturday with the art of Pleasing! That is fine! But to-day it is the *mandore,* the *minstrel.* We no longer write *fugitive poetry.* If I were a poet, I would write *fugitive poems;* but I am not a poet.

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS.

And yet, funeral poems —

THE CHEVALIER.

Fugitive poems, sir. (Aside to Madame de Blinval.) Moreover, *châtel* (citadel) is not French; it should be *castel.*

A GUEST (to the Writer of Funeral Poems).

Allow me to offer a suggestion, sir. You say the *ancient* citadel, why not the *Gothic?*

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS.

Gothic is not used in poetry.

THE GUEST.

Ah! that is different.

THE WRITER OF FUNERAL POEMS (continuing).

You know, sir, one must keep within bounds. I am not

one who wishes to change French verse, and bring back the epoch of Ronsard and Brébeuf. I am a romanticist, but in moderation. So, with the emotions — I like them gentle, dreamy, melancholy, never bloody and horrible. Let the climax be veiled. I know there are some fools with mad imaginations — By the way, ladies, have you read the latest novel?

THE LADIES.

Which one?

THE POET.

The Last Day —

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

No more, sir, I beg! I know the book you mean. The title alone makes me nervous.

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

It affects me in the same way. It is a frightful book. I have it here.

THE LADIES.

Oh! let us see it. (The book is handed around.)

A GUEST (reading).

The Last Day of a —

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

O madame, spare us!

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

It really is a dreadful book, it gives one the nightmare and makes one ill.

A LADY (aside).

I must read it.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

We must admit that morality is growing more depraved every day. Great God, the horrible idea! to develop, study, and analyze, one by one, without an omission, every physical and moral sensation of a man condemned to die. Is it not dreadful? Do you understand, ladies, how any one could

write such a thing, or how any one could read it if it were written?

THE CHEVALIER.

It is the height of impertinence.

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Who is the author?

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

There is no name signed to the first edition.

THE POET.

It is the same one who has already written other novels, the titles of which I forget just now. The first begins at the Morgue and ends at La Grève. In every chapter there is an ogre who eats a child.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

Have you read it, sir?

THE POET.

Yes, sir; the scene is laid in Iceland.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

In Iceland, how frightful!

THE POET.

Besides these, he has written odes, ballads, and I don't know what else, full of monsters who have *corps bleus* (blue bodies).

THE CHEVALIER (laughing).

Corbleu! That would make a tremendous verse.

THE POET.

Besides these, he has published a drama — so it is called — in which this fine line is found: —

"*To-morrow, the twenty-fifth of June, one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven.*"

A Guest.

Ah, what a verse !

The Poet.

It could be written in figures, you see, ladies : —

"*Tomorrow, June 25, 1657.*"

(He laughs. They all laugh.)

The Chevalier.

The poetry of the present day is certainly peculiar.

The Stout Gentleman.

Why, that man does not understand versification. What is his name ?

The Poet.

His name is as hard to remember as it is to pronounce. It has in it something of the Goth, the Visigoth, and the Ostrogoth. (He laughs).

Madame De Blinval.

He is a dreadful man.

The Stout Gentleman.

An abominable man.

A Young Lady.

Some one who knows him told me —

The Stout Gentleman.

Do you know some one who knows him ?

The Young Lady.

Yes ; and he said that the man is very gentle and simple in his habits, that he lives quietly, and spends his days playing with his little children.

The Poet.

And his nights in dreaming of works infernal. — That is strange ; there is a verse which I made unconsciously. But it is a verse, just the same : —

"*And his nights in dreaming of works infernal,*"

with a good cæsura. There is only the corresponding rhyme to find. I have it! *Sepulchral!*

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Quidquid tentabat dicere, versus erat.
(Whatever he uttered was a poem.)

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

You say that the author in question has little children? Impossible, madame, when he has written such a story as this, such a frightful thing!

A GUEST.

What object has this novel?

THE POET.

I have no idea.

A PHILOSOPHER.

It seems to me that it favors the abolishment of capital punishment.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

I tell you it is horrible!

THE CHEVALIER.

So it is a duel with the hangman?

THE POET.

He denounces the guillotine.

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Yes, I can see that; here are invectives.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

Not at all. There are scarcely two pages on capital punishment. It is all sensations.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

There he is wrong. The subject deserves discussion. A drama, a novel, proves nothing. Moreover, I have read the book, and it is very bad.

THE POET.

It is detestable! Is that art? It is going beyond bounds; it is speaking out one's mind too freely. Then, this criminal, if we only knew about him! But no. What did he do? We have no idea. Perhaps he was a very bad fellow. One should not rouse interest in one whom we do not know about.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

One has no right to make his reader suffer physically. When I see a tragedy, I expect a murder. Well, I am not affected. But this novel makes your hair stand on end and your flesh creep. It gives you bad dreams. I spent two days in bed for having read it.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Besides, the book is cold, premeditated.

THE POET.

The book! The book!

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Yes. And as you have just remarked, sir, true art does not consist in that sort of thing. I am not interested in an abstraction, a pure entity. I do not find a personality equal to mine. And then the style is neither simple nor clear. It is archaic. That was what you said, was it not?

THE POET.

No doubt, no doubt. We must avoid personalities.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

The prisoner is not interesting.

THE POET.

How could he be? He has committed a crime, and feels no remorse. I would make him just the opposite. This would be the story of my prisoner. Born of honest parents. Good education. Love. Jealousy. A crime, which was not a

crime. Then remorse, remorse, much remorse. But human laws are implacable; he must die. Then I would argue the question of capital punishment. There!

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Ah! Ah!

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Pardon me. The book, as Monsieur understands it, proves nothing. The particular does not rule the general.

THE POET.

Well, better still, why not have taken for the hero, Malesherbes, for instance? — the virtuous Malesherbes? His last day, his punishment? Oh, fine and noble thought! Then I would have cried, I would have shivered, I would have longed to mount the scaffold with him.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Well, *I* should not.

THE CHEVALIER.

Nor I. At heart he was a Revolutionist.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

The scaffold of Malesherbes would prove nothing against capital punishment in general.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

Capital punishment! Of what use is it to discuss that? How does capital punishment concern you? This author must be of low birth, to give us the nightmare from such a subject.

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Ah! yes; he must have an evil heart.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

He compels us to look into the prisons, into the galleys, into Bicêtre, all of which is extremely disagreeable. We

know, of course, that such places exist; but why should society trouble itself about them?

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

The lawmakers were not children.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

And yet, if the subject were presented in a true light —

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

That is exactly what is lacking, truth. How can a poet be expected to know about such things? One must at least be a public prosecutor. I read in a newspaper a criticism of this book, in which it said that the prisoner did not utter a word when his death-sentence was read; now, I once saw a prisoner, and when the sentence was read, he gave a great shriek. You see the difference.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

Allow —

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Yes, gentleman, the guillotine, the grave, is poor taste; and to prove this, you see that the book is such as corrupts good taste, and makes you incapable of pure, fresh, naïve emotions. When will the defenders of clean, wholesome literature rise? I should like to be a member of the French Academy, and perhaps my public addresses might make me eligible. Here is Monsieur Ergaste, who is a member. What does he think of the *Last Day of a Condemned Man?*

ERGASTE.

Indeed, sir, I have neither read it, nor do I intend to. Yesterday I was dining with Madame de Sénange, and the Marquise de Morival spoke of it to the Duke of Melcourt. They said that there were personalities in it against the magistracy, and especially against President d'Alimont. Abbé Floricour was indignant also. It seems that it contains a chapter

against religion, and one against the monarchy. If I were a public prosecutor —

THE CHEVALIER.

Yes, indeed, public prosecutor! and the charter! and the liberty of the press! Yet you will acknowledge that it would be disagreeable for a poet who wishes to abolish capital punishment. Ah, ah! under the ancient *régime* any one who published a novel against punishment —! But since the fall of the Bastile one can write anything. Books do a frightful amount of harm.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

Frightful. Everything was quiet; we were agitated over nothing. From time to time a head was cut off in France, here and there, two a week at the most, but without noise, without scandal. Nothing was said. No one thought anything of it. And then — this book — a book which gives one a dreadful headache!

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

As though a jury would convict any one after having read it.

ERGASTE.

It hurts one's conscience.

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Ah! Books! Books! Who would have thought that of a novel?

THE POET.

There is no doubt but that books are poisoning society.

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Not to mention the language, which these romanticists revolutionize also.

THE POET.

Let us make a distinction, sir; there are romanticists and romanticists.

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Such poor taste, poor taste.

ERGASTE.

You are right. It is poor taste.

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

There is nothing more to say.

THE PHILOSOPHER (leaning over a lady's chair).

Subjects are discussed in this book which are no longer mentioned even in the Rue Mouffetard.

ERGASTE.

Ah! the wretched book!

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

Oh! do not throw it into the fire. It is hired.

THE CHEVALIER.

Talk of *these* times! Since our day everything is depraved. Do you remember our day, Madame de Blinval?

MADAME DE BLINVAL.

No, Monsieur, I do not.

THE CHEVALIER.

We were the gentlest, the gayest, the wittiest people. There were always beautiful *fêtes* and pretty verses. It was charming. Is there anything more beautiful than Monsieur de La Harpe's madrigal on the great ball given by Madame de Mailly, the marshal's wife, in seventeen hundred and — the year of Damiens' execution.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN (sighing).

Those were happy days! Now the morals are horrible as well as the books. Boileau says in his beautiful lines: —

"And the fall of the arts follows the fall of the morals."

THE PHILOSOPHER (aside to the Poet).

Do they have supper here?

THE POET.

Yes, very soon.

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Now they want to abolish capital punishment; and with this object in view they write novels, cruel, immoral, and in poor taste, like the *Last Day of a Condemned Man* and I don't know what else.

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN.

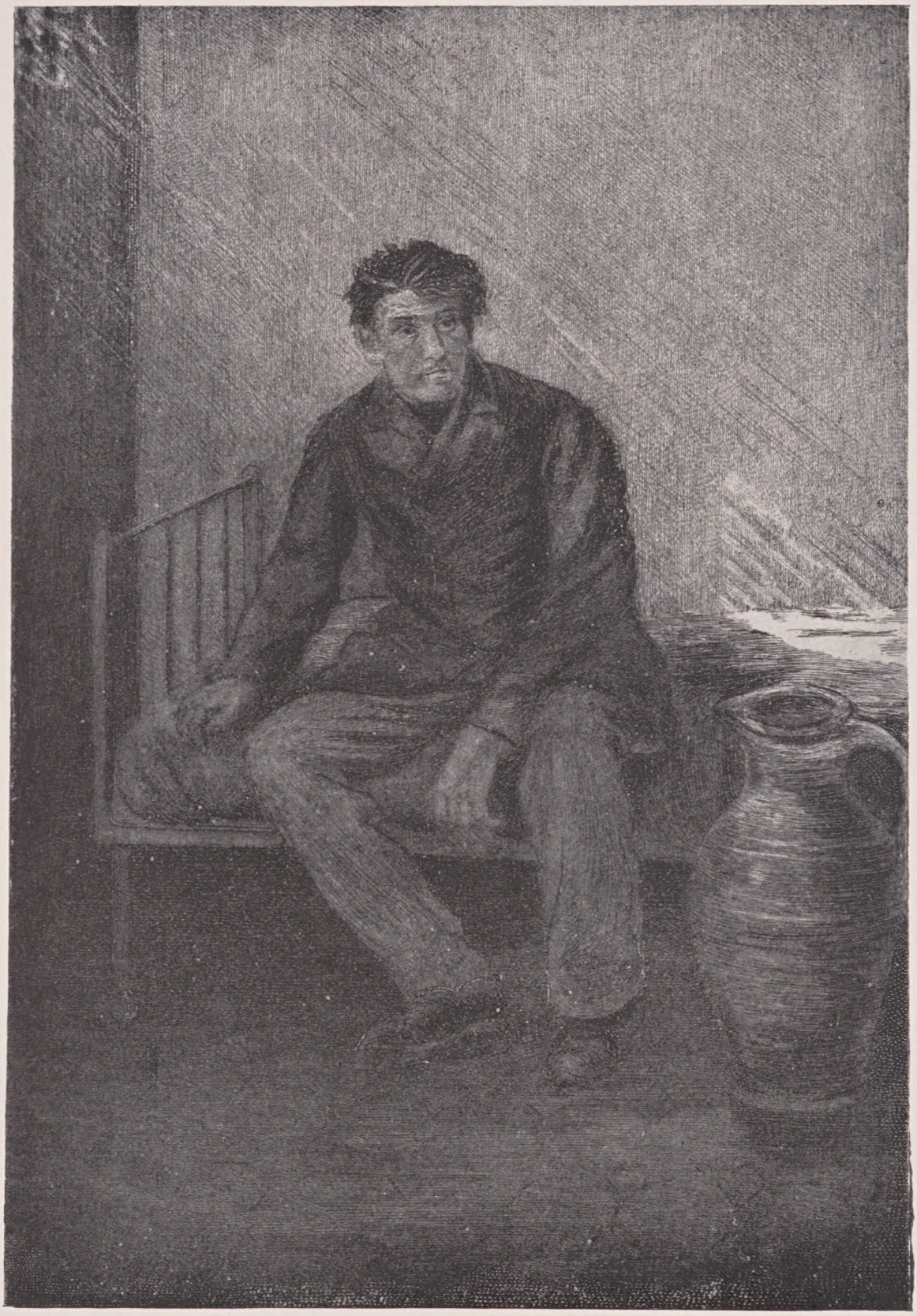
My dear fellow, let us talk no more of this atrocious book; and, by the way, tell me, what are you going to do about that man whose appeal we refused three weeks ago?

THE THIN GENTLEMAN.

Oh, be patient a while! I am on a vacation here. Do let me have a breathing space. Wait until I return. If I am away too long, I will write to my substitute —

A SERVANT (entering).

Madame, supper is served.



"CONDEMNED TO DIE."

CHAPTER I.

BICÊTRE.

CONDEMNED to die!

For five weeks this thought has dwelt within me, and this alone, congealing my blood, bearing me down beneath its weight!

Once, and it seems as if it were years and not weeks ago, I was like other men. Each day, each hour, each moment, was full. My mind was young and active, and it delighted in fancies. One after another they unrolled before me, and I saw the rough and scanty stuff of which life is made, with its embroidery of never-ending arabesques. There were young girls, fine copes belonging to bishops, battles won, theatres full of life and light, and then young girls again, and nocturnal promenades beneath the kindly arms of chestnut-trees. My fancy always pictured *fêtes*. I could dream of what pleased me, for I was free then. Now I am a captive. My body is in chains, in a dungeon. My mind is imprisoned in an idea — a horrible, bloody, wild idea! I have but one thought, one conviction, one certainty: I am condemned to die!

Whatever I do, this dread thought is ever with me, like a ghost at my side, alone and jealous, chasing away all other thoughts, face to face with my wretched self, and touching me with its icy hands when I turn away and close my eyes. It glides along every path where my soul would hide, it mingles like a frightful refrain with every word I hear, it clings to the hideous bars of my prison, it pursues me awake, it spies my troubled sleep, and creeps into my dreams under the form of a knife.

I waken with a start, still pursued by it; I cry: "Ah, it

is nothing but a dream!" — but scarcely are my heavy eyes half opened, before I see the dread thought written on the horrible reality which surrounds me, on the damp, close floor of my cell, in the pale rays of my night-lamp, in the coarse woof of my garments, on the sombre figure of the sentinel, with his cartridge-box gleaming through the bars. It seems to me that even now, a voice whispers in my ear: Condemned to die!

CHAPTER II.

It was a beautiful morning in August. For three days my trial had been going on; for three days my name and my crime had called together a crowd of spectators, who swooped down upon the benches of the court-room like so many crows around a corpse; for three days the phantasmagoria of judges, witnesses, lawyers, and public prosecutors had been coming and going before me, now grotesque, now bloody, but always dark and dreadful. The first two nights I had not been able to sleep from anxiety and fright; but weariness, physical and mental, brought me rest on the third. At midnight I had left the judges, who were to come to a decision. I was taken back to the straw of my dungeon; and I fell into a deep sleep, a sleep of forgetfulness. That was the first peaceful moment I had had for many a day.

I was still sleeping soundly when they came to waken me. This time the heavy step and the iron shoes of the turnkey, the rattle of his bunch of keys, and the hoarse grinding of the locks, were not enough to rouse me from my lethargy. It needed his rough voice in my ear, and his heavy hand upon my arm. "Get up, will you?" I opened my eyes, and sat up in terror. Just at that instant there fell through the high narrow grating of my cell, upon the ceiling of the adjoining corridor, the only ray of light I had seen for a long time, the yellow reflection, which eyes accustomed to the shade of a prison easily recognize as the sun. I love the sun.

"It is a fair day," I said to the jailer.

For a moment he did not answer, as if doubtful whether it were worth while to waste a word; then with an effort he muttered roughly: —

"Perhaps it is."

I was silent, my mind seemed half asleep, but my lips were smiling, and my eyes were fixed upon the soft ray of gold which illuminated the ceiling.

"It is a beautiful day," I said again.

"Yes," the man returned; "and they are waiting for you."

The words, like a thread which breaks the flight of an insect, brought me violently back to reality. I saw again, like a flash of lightning, the dreary court-room, the horseshoe of the judges which was covered with bloody rags, the three rows of stupid-looking witnesses, the two gendarmes on either side of me, and the swaying black gowns; then, the billowy sea of heads at the farther end of the room, and the fixed gaze of the dozen jurors, who had kept watch while I slept!

I rose; my teeth chattered, my hands trembled, my limbs shook, I could not find my clothes. At my first step I swayed like a man carrying too heavy a burden. But I followed the jailer.

The two gendarmes were waiting at the door of my cell. They put handcuffs on my wrists, and carefully closed the complicated little padlocks. I let them do it; they were machines on a machine.

We crossed an inner court. The brisk morning air revived me. I raised my head. The sky was blue; and the warm rays of the sun, falling across the long chimneys, marked great angles of light on the topmost walls of the dark prison. It was a beautiful day indeed.

We ascended a spiral staircase, crossed a corridor, then another, and still a third, and finally reached a low door that stood open. A heavy odor and the confused murmuring voices came to me; it was the crowd in the court-room. I entered.

At sight of me there rose a clashing of arms and of voices. The benches were hastily moved back, the boards creaked; and as I crossed the room, between two crowds of people, flanked by soldiers, I felt that I was the centre to which were attached the threads which pulled every gaping, staring face.

Suddenly I noticed that I was without irons; but when or where they had been removed I had no idea.

Then a great hush fell upon the room. I was in my place. As the noise and tumult of the crowd ceased, my mind also grew calm; and all at once I saw clearly, what up to then I had realized only in a dazed way, that the decisive moment had come, that I was there to hear my sentence.

Explain it as you will, this thought caused me no terror. The windows were open; the air and the noise of the city fell upon my ears; the room was as bright as if there were to be a wedding there; the sun's rays fell here and there in shining crosses, upon the floor, on the tables, broken by the angles of the wall; and from the shining mouldings of the windows each beam hung in the air, a great prism of shimmering gold.

The judges on the platform had a satisfied air, probably because they had reached a decision. The features of the presiding judge, thrown into soft relief by a ray from one of the windows, looked calm and kind; a young attorney was smoothing out his cravat, and talking gayly to a pretty lady in a red bonnet, who as a mark of special favor had been given a seat behind him.

The jurors alone appeared wearied and discouraged, but I thought they looked so because they had been up all night. Some of them yawned. Nothing in their kindly faces showed that they had just pronounced a death-sentence; they seemed to me as if they wanted nothing but a good night's sleep.

In front of me a window stood wide open. I heard the flower-venders laughing on the quay; and on the window-bench a pretty little yellow plant, bathed in the sunlight, was playing with the wind in a cranny of the wall.

How could a gloomy thought enter into the midst of so many pleasant ones? Surrounded by the outer air and the sunshine, I could think of nothing but liberty; hope glowed within me, like the daylight without; and in perfect confidence I awaited my sentence as one awaits freedom and life.

My lawyer, whom they had been expecting, arrived at last. He had breakfasted heartily. Taking his place, he leaned toward me with a smile.

"I have hope," said he.

"So have I," I replied easily, smiling also.

"Yes," he continued; "although, of course, I know nothing of their decision, still I have no doubt they will refuse to find premeditation, and in that case it will be only penal servitude."

"What do you mean, sir?" I asked indignantly; "I would prefer death, a hundred times! Yes, death!" Besides, some inner voice whispered, what do I risk by saying this? Has a death-sentence ever been pronounced except at twelve o'clock on a cold, drizzling winter night, in a dark and gloomy room, beneath the glare of candles?

It would be impossible in the month of August, at eight o'clock in the morning, on such a beautiful day, and by such a kind jury! And my eyes turned again to the pretty yellow flower playing in the sun.

Then the presiding judge, who had been waiting only for my lawyer, told me to rise. The gendarmes "presented arms;" and as from an electric shock, the entire crowd stood up. A small, insignificant fellow, at a table below the judges, the clerk, I suppose he was, began to read the verdict of the jury. A cold perspiration came from my every limb, and I leaned against the wall to keep from falling.

"Lawyer, have you anything to say as to why the sentence should not be pronounced?" asked the judge.

I had everything to say, but no word came to me. My tongue clove to my mouth.

The defence rose.

I understood that he was trying to soften the decision of the jury, and to substitute for the punishment prescribed, the other suggestion, which had made me so angry.

My indignation must indeed have been great, to make itself felt above the thousand conflicting emotions of my

mind. I wanted to shout out what I had already told him: "I prefer death a hundred times!" But breath failed me; and I could only grasp him roughly by the arm, and cry hoarsely, "No!"

The attorney-general began to argue with the lawyer, and I listened with a dazed sort of satisfaction. The judges then withdrew; after a moment they returned, and the presiding judge read my sentence.

"Condemned to die!" shouted the crowd; and while they led me away, the people rushed at my heels with the noise of a falling building. I walked along dazed and stupefied. A change had taken place in me. Up to the moment of the death-sentence, I had been living, breathing among other men; now I clearly saw that there was a high wall between the world and myself. Nothing seemed the same to me. The great shining windows, the beautiful sunshine, the clear sky, the pretty flower, — all were white and dull, like a shroud. The crowd of men, women, and children following me were like phantoms.

At the foot of the staircase, a dirty black and closely barred vehicle awaited me. As I stepped in, I happened to glance across the Square. "A man condemned to die!" cried several passers-by, running toward the carriage. Through the cloud which seemed to rise between me and the surrounding objects, I saw two young girls following me with wide-opened eyes. "Good!" exclaimed the younger one, clapping her hands, "it will be in six weeks."

CHAPTER III.

CONDEMNED to die!

Well, why not? "*Men*," I remember to have read in some book which contained nothing else that was good, "*Men are all condemned to die with various reprieves.*" How is my position any different?

Since my sentence was pronounced, how many have died who had expected a long life! How many have gone before me, who, young, free, and healthy, had counted on seeing my head fall upon the Place de Grève! How many, even now, may die before me, who are now living, breathing the glad air, and coming and going as they please!

And then, why should I want to live? The dull light, the black prison bread, the portion of thin soup, which is brought to me in a galley's bowl, the harsh treatment I receive from the jailers and keepers, — I, who am refined and educated, — without a single human being near me who thinks me worthy of a word or to whom I can speak, trembling at everything that I have done and that others are going to do, — these are about the only blessings of which the hangman can rob me.

But, it is horrible!

CHAPTER IV.

The black carriage brought me here, to this hideous Bicêtre.

Seen from afar, the building is somewhat majestic in appearance. It spreads along the horizon, on the brow of a hill, and, in the distance, still preserves some of its former splendor, the appearance of a king's château. But as one approaches, the palace is found to be in ruins. The fallen wings hurt one's feelings. Shame and poverty stare down from the royal façades; it looks as if there were leprosy behind the walls. It is without windows or window-frames, with nothing but great iron cross-bars, and here and there the wan face of a galley or a madman peering through.

This is a near view of life.

CHAPTER V.

Scarcely had I arrived, before handcuffs were placed on me. Precautions were redoubled; I was allowed neither knife nor fork at meals; the *strait-jacket*, a sort of linen bag with wings, imprisoned my arms. The jailers were responsible for my life. I had sued for a writ of error; the troublesome business would not be over for six or seven weeks, and it was important that I should reach the Place de Grève safe and sound.

During the first few days they treated me with a gentleness which was horrible. The respect of a jailer savors of the scaffold. But, happily, after a time, their manner changed. I was handled like the other prisoners, with a common brutality, and received no more of the special and polite attentions which brought the hangman constantly before me. This was not the sole improvement. My youth, my submission, the interest that the prison chaplain took in me, and especially some Latin words which I addressed to the *concierge*, who did not understand them, made them allow me to walk once a week with the other prisoners, without the strait-jacket, which was paralyzing me. After much hesitation, they also allowed me ink, paper, pens, and a night-lamp.

Every Sunday, after service, I am allowed in the yard at the hour of exercise, and then I talk with the prisoners. I have to. They are good fellows, the poor wretches. They tell me of their crimes, which are horrible to hear; but I know that they are boasting, They are teaching me to speak slang, to "*rouscailler bigorne*" (swing the anvil), as they say. It is a language which has grown upon the general language like a hideous excrescence or wart. Sometimes it is strangely forcible and frightfully graphic. For instance: *there is some*

juice on the trimar (blood on the road); *to marry the widow* (to be hanged), as if the rope of the hangman were the widow of every one who is hanged. A robber's head has two names, *the Sorbonne*, when it plans, reasons out, and advises crime; the *tronche*, when the hangman cuts it off. Sometimes the language has the wit of a Vaudeville: as *a wicker cashmire* (a rag-picker's basket) *the lyer* (the tongue); and then, everywhere, every instant, strange, mysterious words occur, rough and unseemly, coined, one knows not where, as, *the taule* (the hangman), *the cône* (death), *the placarde* (the place of execution). They use the words *toads* and *spiders*. To hear this language spoken gives one an idea of something dirty and dusty, of a bundle of rags shaken in front of one. But these men pity me, at least, and they are the only ones. The jailers, the wardens, and the turnkeys, — I hate them, — talk and laugh, and discuss me before my very eyes, as if I were a thing.

CHAPTER VI.

I said to myself, —

"Since I have writing materials, why not use them?" But what shall I write? Imprisoned within four stone walls, cold and bare, without space to walk, without a horizon for my eyes, my one diversion consisting in following mechanically throughout the entire day the slow march of the white square which the peep-hole of my door cuts out on the opposite dull wall, and as I just now said, alone with one idea, an idea of crime and punishment, of murder and of death, — is there anything for me to tell, I who have nothing left to do in this world? What would there be in my worn-out and empty brain which would be worth writing?

And yet why not? If everything about me is dull and monotonous, is there not within me a tempest, a strife, a tragedy? Does not this fixed thought which possesses me, appear before me, every hour, every instant, under a new form, more hideous and bloody as the time approaches? Why should I not try to tell myself all that is strange and dreadful in my loneliness. Surely the field is a wide one; and short as my life may be between now and then, there will be plenty of chances to use my pen and ink, in writing of the agony, the terror, and the tortures that assail me. Besides, the only way to lighten my agony is to study it, and writing it will be a distraction to me.

Perhaps, too, what I write will not be wholly useless. This diary of my suffering, hour after hour, minute after minute, torture after torture, if I have strength enough left to carry it up to the moment when it will be *physically* impossible to continue it, — may not this story (necessarily unfinished, but as complete as possible) of my feelings, carry with it a great

and mighty lesson? Might there not be more than a lesson for those who convict, in this verbal process of agonizing thought, in this ever-increasing chain of suffering, in this kind of intellectual autopsy of a man condemned to die? Perhaps my story will make them more lenient, when at some future time the question arises of throwing a thinking head, a man's head, into what they call the scales of justice. Perhaps the wretched men have never thought of the slow succession of tortures included under the expeditious form of a death-sentence. Have they ever considered the painful thought that in the man whom they condemn there is an intellect, an intellect which had counted on life, a soul which was not prepared for death? No. In all that, they see only the vertical fall of a triangular knife, thinking, no doubt, that for the condemned man there is nothing before or after.

These leaves will undeceive them. Perhaps they will be published some day, and may make the mind of these men ponder an instant upon mental suffering; for this they do not suspect. They triumph at being able to kill without making the body suffer. Ah! that is what they think! But what is physical suffering when compared to moral? How horrible and pitiful it is that laws should be made thus! The day will come, and perhaps these memoirs, the last confidences of a poor wretch, may help to hasten it. . . .

At least, after my death, may the wind not play in the yard with these sheets of paper, covered with mud; may they not rot in the rain, pasted like stars to the broken window of a jailer's room.

CHAPTER VII.

May all that I write here some day be of use to others; may it keep the judge from pronouncing death sentences; may it save poor wretches, whether they are innocent or not, from the agony to which I am condemned. And yet why? To what end? For what good? When my head is cut off, what difference will it make to me if they cut off other heads? Can I really think of such nonsense as this? Suppose they hurl down the scaffold after I have mounted it! I ask you what good will it do me?

What! the sun, the spring, the flowering fields, the birds who awaken the morning, the clouds, the trees, nature, liberty, life, — have I lost them all?

Ah! It is I who must be saved! Is it really true that this cannot be, that I must die to-morrow, to-day perhaps; is this true? O God! What a horrible idea it is to dash out one's brains against the walls of one's prison!

CHAPTER VIII.

Let me count the time that still remains. Three days' stay after the sentence, for the writ of error.

Eight days of oblivion before the Court of Appeals, after which the *briefs*, as they are called, are filed with the clerk.

Fifteen days delay at the clerk's, who does not know that they even exist, and who, nevertheless, is supposed to have transmitted them, after examination, to the Court of Appeals.

There, each one is classified, numbered, and registered; for the guillotine is crowded, and each must go in turn.

Fifteen days to watch for something which may not favor you in the end. Finally, the Court sits, usually on a Thursday, rejects twenty writs together, sends them all back to the clerk, who in turn sends them to the attorney-general, who transmits them to the hangman. Three days.

On the morning of the fourth, the deputy of the attorney-general says to himself, as he ties his cravat, "We must bring this case to a close." Then, if the deputy clerk is not kept at home by a breakfast with some friends, the warrant of execution is drawn up, written, copied fair, and despatched; and the following day at dawn a frame is heard being erected on the Place de Grève, and in the streets criers are shouting with hoarse voices.

Six weeks in all. The young girl was right. But, here are at least five and perhaps six weeks, I dare not stop to count which, that I have already been in this prison of Bicêtre, and it seems to me that three days ago was Thursday.

CHAPTER IX.

HAVE just made my will. And yet what is the use? I am condemned at great cost, and all that I have will scarcely suffice to settle it. The guillotine is very expensive.

I leave a mother, a wife, and one child. A little girl, three years old, sweet, rosy, and frail, with great black eyes and long, nut-brown hair.

She was two years and one month old when I last saw her.

So, after my death, there will be three women, without a son, a husband, and a father; three orphans, so to speak; three widows in point of law.

I admit that I am justly punished; but what have these innocent ones done?

No matter, they are disgraced, ruined; this is justice.

It is not my poor old mother who troubles me; she will die — or, if she lasts a few days longer, if up to the last moment she has a few warm coals in her stove, she will say nothing.

Nor is it my wife who troubles me; she is already weak and in poor health; she will die too.

I hope she will not go mad. They say that that makes one live; but at least the mind does not suffer; it sleeps and is as if it were dead.

But my daughter, my child, my poor little Marie, who laughs and plays, who is singing even now, and thinking of nothing. Ah! it is this that hurts me!

CHAPTER X.

My cell consists of this:

Eight square feet and four walls of freestone at right angles to a flag-stone floor, which is raised one step above the outer corridor.

To the right of the door, upon entering, is a sort of recess, a parody on an alcove. Here they have thrown a bit of straw on which the prisoner is supposed to rest and sleep, covered with a pair of linen trousers and a coat of ticking, the same, winter and summer.

Above my head, instead of the sky, is a black vault, — an *ogive*, it is called, — from which hang thick cobwebs like rags.

For the rest, there are no windows, not even a vent-hole; and the one wooden door is entirely covered with iron.

No, I am wrong; in the centre of the door, toward the top, there is an opening, nine thumbs in width, cut out in the shape of a cross, and which at night is closed by the jailer.

Outside, is a long corridor, lighted and aired by means of narrow vent-holes near the ceiling, and divided into stone compartments, which open into one another by a series of low, arched doors; each compartment serves as some sort of an antechamber to a cell like mine. In these cells are the criminals sentenced by the director of the prison to severe discipline. The first three cells are reserved for those condemned to die, because, being nearer the jail, they are more convenient for the jailer. These cells are all that is left of the ancient château of Bicêtre, as it was built in the fifteenth century by the Cardinal of Winchester. He was the one who ordered Jeanne d'Arc burned. I heard this from some *visitors* who came to see me the other day in my cell, and who

looked at me from a distance as though I were a beast in a menagerie. They gave the jailer a hundred sous for admitting them.

I forgot to say that day and night there is a gendarme at the door of my cell, and that I cannot raise my eyes to the square hole without always finding his, wide open, and staring at me.

People suppose that there are air and light in this stone box.

CHAPTER XI.

SINCE it was not yet daylight, I was wondering what I should do with the night, when all at once an idea came into my mind. I rose and turned my lamp upon the four walls of my cell. They are covered with names, scrawls, and strange figures, one running into the other. It seems as though each convict wanted to leave a mark behind him here, at least. They are in pencil, chalk, charcoal, black, white, and gray, and often are cut deep into the stone, while here and there are rusty marks that might have been written with blood. Surely, were my mind clear, I would take much interest in this strange book which is developing, page after page, before my eyes on every stone of my cell. I should like to gather all these fragmentary thoughts together that are scattered over the stones, and find the owner under every name, and give life and feeling to these worn-out inscriptions, these broken sentences, these mangled words, these bodies without heads, like those who wrote them.

At the head of my bed are two burning hearts pierced by an arrow, and above are written the words: "*Love for life.*" The unfortunate writer did not make a long engagement.

By the side of this is a three-cornered hat with a small figure roughly sketched above it, and these words: "Long live the Emperor! 1824."

More burning hearts, with the inscription, a characteristic one in a prison: "*I love and adore Matthew Danvin.* JACQUES."

On the opposite wall is: "*Papavoine.*" The capital P is embellished with arabesques, and is carefully drawn.

A stanza of an obscene song.

A liberty-cap cut deep into the stone, with this below: "*Bories. — The Republic.*" He was one of the four sub-officers of La Rochelle. Poor fellow! How hideous are their imaginary political needs! For an idea, a dream, a thought, to meet this dread reality called the guillotine! And I am complaining, I, a wretch who has committed a real crime, who has spilled blood!

I shall look no further among the inscriptions. I have just seen, in white crayon in the corner of the wall, a frightful picture, — the picture of the scaffold which perhaps is being built even now for me. The lamp just escaped falling from my hands.

CHAPTER XII.

I SAT down hurriedly on my straw, and my head fell forward upon my knees. But as soon as my childish terror had passed away I felt a strange curiosity to look again along the wall. Next to the name of Papavoine I removed a huge spider-web, thick with dust, from a corner of the wall. Behind the web were four or five names which were perfectly legible, and several others of which only a faint impression remained: "Dautun, 1815; Poulain, 1818; Jean Martin, 1821; Castaing, 1823." As I read these names I remembered the sad fate of each. Dautun cut his brother into pieces, and one night threw the head into a fountain and the body into a sewer in Paris. Poulain murdered his wife. Jean Martin shot his father as the old man was opening a window. Castaing, the physician, poisoned his friend; and instead of thying to cure him, as he pretended to do, he gave him more poison. Near to these was Papavoine, the dreadful madman who killed children by cutting open their heads.

A hot shiver went through me. These are the ones, I thought to myself, who have occupied my cell before me. Here, on the very floor on which I am standing, they thought their last thoughts, these bloody murderers! In this very dungeon, within these very walls, their last steps turned back and forth like a wild beast. Others took their places without delay; it seems that the cell is never empty. They left the place warm, and it is to me they left it. I, in turn, shall follow them to Clamart Cemetery, where the grass is always green.

I am neither visionary nor superstitious; perhaps these thoughts are making me feverish, but while I was thinking of them, it seemed to me all at once that these fatal names

were written in lines of fire on the dark wall. A wild ringing was in my ears, a red glare came before my eyes; and then it seemed as though the dungeon were full of men, strange men, who carried their heads in their left hands, and held their hands between their teeth, for they had no hair. All shook their fists at me, except the parricide.

I closed my eyes in horror, but they all came before me still more distinctly.

Whether it was a dream, a vision, or a reality, I should have gone mad if a sudden thought had not dispelled them. I was on the point of falling when I felt crawling over my bare foot, a cold body with hairy legs; it was the spider whose web I had torn down.

That brought me back to myself. Oh, the frightful spectres! No, it was all a phantom, an idea of my empty and tortured brain. A fancy like Macbeth's! The dead are dead, — those who have been here, at least. They are safely locked within the tomb. It is not a prison from which one can escape. How could I have been so terrified? The door of the tomb does not open from within.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW days ago I saw a horrible sight.

It happened before daylight. The prison was very noisy. I heard the opening and closing of the heavy gates, the turning of the locks and the iron bolts, the clank of the heavy bunches of keys hanging from the jailers' waists, the stairs creaking from top to bottom beneath hurried steps, and voices calling and answering from one end of the long corridors to the other. My neighbors in the cell of correction were more gay than usual. All Bicêtre seemed to be laughing, singing, running, and dancing.

I, the only quiet one in all this hubbub, the only still being in all the uproar, sat wondering and on the alert, listening to every sound.

A jailer passed.

I ventured to call and ask him if there was a *fête* going on in the prison.

"You may call it a *fête* if you like!" he replied. "To-day they are going to put the irons on the convicts who start to-morrow for Toulon. Do you want to see them? It will amuse you."

A show of any kind, however disagreeable, was a lucky thing for a solitary prisoner, and I accepted the fellow's offer.

The jailer took the usual precautions, to make sure of me, and then led me into a small empty cell, which contained not an article of furniture. It had a grated window, but a real window nevertheless, breast-high, and from which the real sky was visible.

"Here," said he, "you can see and hear. You will be alone in your box, like a king."

He went out, drawing after him the locks, bolts, and bars.

The window looked out upon a good-sized square court, around the four sides of which, like a wall, rose a great stone structure six stories high. Nothing could be more disagreeable, more forlorn, nor more wretched-looking than that façade with its many barred gratings, behind which peered out, above and below, a crowd of thin, white faces, one over the other, like the stones in a wall, and all framed, as it were, between the iron bars. They were the prisoners, watching the ceremony in which some day they were to take part. They looked like souls who were undergoing the punishment of purgatory, on their way to hell.

They were watching in silence the empty court. They were waiting. Among the tired, heavy faces, here and there shone out wild, piercing eyes, like sparks of fire.

The prison which surrounded the four sides of the square was not an unbroken wall. One of the four sides (the one looking to the east) was separated near the centre, and was connected to the other part by an iron railing. This railing opened on to a second court, smaller than the first, and, like it, flanked with walls full of black holes.

Around the walls of the main court were placed stone benches. In the centre was an iron pole for holding a lantern.

Noon struck. A large *porte-cochère* hidden behind a projection was suddenly opened. A wagon appeared, escorted by a species of dirty and shamefaced-looking soldiers in blue uniforms, with red epaulets and yellow shoulder-straps. It dragged heavily across the court with the noise of grating iron. It contained the *chiourme* (the galley-slaves) and the chains.

At the same instant, as though that sound had roused every other, the spectators at the windows, who, until then, had stood still and silent, burst out into joyful cries and songs and threats and imprecations, mingled with shouts of laughter, painful to hear. They looked and acted like devils. A grin was on every face, every fist was thrust through the bars, every voice cried out, every eye flamed. I was startled to see such sparks bursting out from the cinders.

The keepers, among whom I recognized from their fresh clothes and their apparent fright some curious visitors from Paris, went calmly on with their work. One jumped into the wagon, and threw out the chains, travelling-collars, and bundles of linen trousers. Then they divided the work. Some went to a corner of the court, and unwound the long chains, which, in their slang, are called *the strings ;* others spread out on the pavement *the taffetas*, the shirts and trousers ; the wisest, under the eye of their captain, a short, thickset old man, examined the iron collars, which they tested still further by throwing them upon the pavement. All this went on under the derisive shouts of the prisoners, and the loud laughter of the convicts for whom it was done, and who were lined up behind the gratings of the old prison, which looked out upon the small court.

When these preliminaries were over, a gentleman with silver embroidery on his coat, whom they called *the inspector*, gave an order to the director of the prison ; and a moment later, from two or three of the lower doors, there poured out all at once into the court, like a cloud of smoke, hideous crowds of ragged, shouting men. These were the convicts.

At sight of them, the clamor at the windows increased. Some of those who bore great names were welcomed with cries and shouts, which they received with a sort of proud modesty. The most of them wore caps which they had themselves woven from the straw in their cells, of so curious a shape that those who wore them could not fail to be noticed. One in particular aroused shouts of enthusiasm, — a young man, perhaps seventeen years of age, with a face as smooth as a girl's. He came out of his cell where he had been for a week. He had made a garment out of straw, which covered him from head to foot ; and he sprang into the court, rolling over and over, with the agility of a serpent. He was a juggler, convicted of theft. There was a burst of handclapping and shouts of joy. The galley-slaves answered it, and the exchange of gayety between the real convicts and

the candidates was frightful. Society, represented by the jailers and the frightened visitors, was of small account there; crime laughed in its very face, and made a family *fête* of this frightful punishment.

As each convict came out, he was led between two lines of gendarmes to the barred court, where he waited for the visit of the physicians. It was at this point that each tried a last resort in order to escape the journey, offering as an excuse their health, poor eyesight, lameness, or a maimed hand. But almost all were found fitted for work; and each resigned himself carelessly, forgetting a few minutes after, his pretended life infirmity.

The grating of the small court opened. A guard called the roll alphabetically; and then each convict came out, one by one, and took his stand in a corner of the large court, next to a comrade whose initial letter happened to be the same. Thus each was alone, carrying his own chain, side by side with a stranger; and if a convict chanced to be near a friend, the chain separated them. This was their greatest punishment.

When about thirty had gone out, the grating was closed. A keeper singled them out with his baton, threw in front of each a shirt, a jacket, and a pair of coarse linen trousers, then gave the signal, and they all began to undress. An unlooked-for incident changed this humiliation into torture.

Until then the weather had been clear; and although the October air was cold, every now and then the gray clouds opened, and from the chinks fell a ray of sunlight. But scarcely had the convicts dropped their prison-rags, and just as they stood naked before the suspicious glances of the keepers, and the curious looks of the strangers who walked around them in order to examine their shoulders, the sky became black, a cold autumn rain began to fall in torrents upon the square court, upon the bare heads and naked bodies of the galley-slaves, and upon their miserable clothes lying on the pavement.

In the twinkling of an eye the yard was cleared of everyone who was not a keeper or a galley-slave. The visitors from Paris sought shelter beneath the doorways.

The rain fell in torrents. Nothing could be seen in the court but the naked, dripping convicts on the soaked pavement. A moody silence had succeeded their boastful shouting. They shivered; their teeth chattered; their thin limbs and bent knees knocked against each other, and it was pitiful to see them putting over their blue bodies the shirts, jackets, and trousers which were soaked with the rain. They would better have remained naked.

One old man, however, was still lively. He cried out, wringing his dripping shirt, that "*this was not on the programme;*" then he began to laugh, shaking his fist at the sky.

When they had put on their travelling-clothes, they were led in groups of twenty or thirty to the other corner of the yard, where the cordons awaited them. These cordons are great long chains crossed every two feet by other shorter chains, at the end of which is attached a square collar which opens by means of a hinge fastened to one of the corners, and closes at the opposite corner by an iron bolt, locked on the galley-slave's neck throughout the entire journey. As these cordons lie on the ground they look like the backbone of a fish.

They made the slaves sit down in the mud on the soaking pavements. They tried on the collars; then two of the prison blacksmiths brought portable anvils, and riveted them on with a great iron hammer. It was a dreadful moment, and the bravest paled. At every stroke of the hammer upon the anvil, which leaned against their back, the victim's chin rebounded; the least movement made his head jump like a nutshell.

After this was done the convicts became gloomy. Nothing was heard but the clanking of the chains, an occasional groan, and the dull thud of the keeper's baton on the limbs

of the offender. Some cried; the old men shivered and bit their lips. I looked with terror upon all these sinister profiles in their iron frames.

After the visit of the physicians, came that of the jailers; and after the jailers, the putting into chains. Three acts to the play!

A ray of sunlight appeared. It acted like a touch of fire. The convicts rose with one accord. The five cordons took hold of hands, and all together they formed an immense circle about the lantern-pole. My eyes grew weary watching them turn. They sang a prison-song, a slangy romance, to a tune now sad, now wild and gay. Every now and then shrill cries were heard and bursts of hoarse, breathless laughter, mingled with strange words; then furious shouts rang out, the clanking chains serving as an orchestra to the song, which was harsher than their grating. If ever I wanted a picture of a nocturnal meeting of witches I should ask for nothing better or worse than this.

A large tub was brought into the yard. The keeper stopped the dance with his baton, and led the convicts to this tub, in which some herbs were floating in a dirty, smoky, liquid. They began to eat.

When they had finished, they threw upon the pavement what was left of their soup and brown bread, and began to dance and sing again. It seems that this privilege is allowed them on this day and the following night.

I was watching the strange sight with such a hungry, trembling, close attention, that I had forgotten myself. A great pity filled me, and their laughter made me weep.

Suddenly, in the midst of my deep revery I saw the shouting circle stop and grow silent. Then every eye turned toward my window.

"The condemned man! The condemned man!" they cried, shaking their fingers; and the bursts of laughter increased.

I stood petrified.

I had no idea where they had seen me before or how they recognized me.

"Good-morning! Good-evening!" they cried, with their horrible chuckle. One of the youngest who was condemned to the galleys gave me a dull look of envy, and exclaimed: "He is happy! He will be *cut off!* (beheaded!) Farewell, comrade!"

I cannot describe my feelings. I was their comrade, in truth. La Grève is sister to Toulon. I was even on a lower level than they; they did me an honor. I shivered.

Yes, their comrade! And in a few days I, too, might be an amusing sight for them.

I was standing at the window, immovable, petrified, paralyzed; but when I saw the five cordons rush toward me with words of infernal good-fellowship, when I heard the frightful clanking of their chains, their shouts, their steps at the foot of the wall, it seemed as though this crowd of demons were climbing into my wretched cell. I gave a shriek, and hurled myself against the door with force enough to break it. No means of escape; the locks were drawn on the outside. I yelled, I shouted in fury. Then I seemed to hear the convicts' fearful voices coming nearer. I thought that their hideous faces were already at my window; I gave a second agonizing cry, and fell senseless to the floor.

CHAPTER XIV.

When I recovered consciousness it was night. I was on a pallet; a lantern threw a flickering light on the ceiling, and I saw rows of other pallets on both sides of mine. I knew that I was in the hospital. For a moment I lay awake, but without thinking of anything, entirely given up to the joy of being in a bed. Once, this hospital and prison-cot would have made me shudder in disgust and pity; but I was no longer the same man. To be sure, the sheets were soiled and coarse to the touch, and the covering thin and ragged. I felt the boards beneath the mattress; but what of that? My limbs could stretch out between the rough sheets; and beneath the covering, thin as it was, I felt that horrible cold in my bones slowly beginning to disappear. I fell asleep again.

I was awakened by a great uproar; it was daybreak. The noise came from without. My bed was by the side of a window, and I rose to see what was happening.

The window looked out upon the great court of Bicêtre, which was filled with people; two lines of veterans had all they could do to make a narrow path across the court in the midst of the crowd.

Between this double line of soldiers, five long wagons full of men were jogging slowly along, jostling over each stone. They were the convicts who were leaving.

The wagons were uncovered. Each cordon occupied one. The convicts were seated sidewise on the benches, one leaning against the other, separated by their common chain, which lay along the entire length of the wagon, at the end of which stood a keeper, gun in hand. The clanking of the irons could be heard; and at every shake of the wagon, their heads were jerked forward and their dangling legs shook.

A fine, thin rain was falling, making the air frigid, and causing their gray linen trousers, which were already black, to cling to their knees. The rain poured from their long beards and short hair, their faces were purple; they were shivering, and their teeth chattered with rage and cold. More than this, they could not move. Once riveted within the chain, one is no longer anything but a part of that hideous cordon which moves like one man. The intellect leaves one; the prison-collar condemns it to death; and as to the being himself, he has no longer desires and an appetite except at fixed hours. So, motionless, the most of them half-naked, with bare heads and dangling feet, they began their journey of twenty-five days, seated in the same wagons, and dressed in the same clothes under the perpendicular sun of July as in the cold rains of November. One might say that in their office of hangmen, men wish the climate to do half.

Some sort of a horrible harangue arose between the people and those in the wagons, — abuse on the one side, bravado on the other, curses on both; but at a sign from the captain, I saw blows raining from the baton upon the wagons, on shoulders and heads alike, and everything assumed that exterior calm called *order*. But the wretches' eyes were full of vengeance, and their fists were clinched on their knees.

The five wagons, guarded by mounted gendarmes and keepers on foot, disappeared one after another beneath the high arched gate of Bicêtre; a sixth followed, in which the kettles, brass porringers, and extra chains rattled together in noisy confusion. Some keepers who had been detained at the canteen ran out to catch up with their squad. The crowd began to scatter. The picture vanished like a phantasmagoria. By degrees, the heavy rolling of the wheels and the tramp of the horses' hoofs on the paved road from Fontainebleau grew faint, and the crack of the whips, the clank of the chains, and the cries of the people wishing the galleys an unlucky journey, died away.

But for them it was only the beginning!

What was it the lawyer said to me? The galleys! Ah, yes! death a thousand times, — the scaffold rather than the galleys; nothing rather than hell. I would give my neck to the knife of the guillotine, but not to the prison-collar! The galleys, just Heaven!

CHAPTER XV.

UNFORTUNATELY I was not ill, and the next day I had to leave the hospital and return to my cell.

Not ill! Ah no, I am young, strong, and healthy. The blood runs freely in my veins; my every member answers my every fancy. I am strong in mind and body, I was made to live long; yes, this is all true, and yet I have a malady, — a mortal malady, a malady made by the hand of man.

Since I came from the hospital, the idea has come to me to become mad; perhaps I might escape if I could do this. The doctors and the Sisters of Charity seemed to be interested in me. To die so young, and such a death! One would have thought they were sorry for me, they gathered so close about my pallet. Bah! it was from curiosity. And then, these people who help you, cure you of a fever, but not of a death-sentence. Yet that would be so easy for them. An open door! What would it matter to them?

I have no chance now; my appeal will be rejected because everything is correct. The witnesses testified clearly; the plaintiffs have pleaded well; the judges have sentenced. I do not expect — but — no; what folly! There is no more hope. The appeal is a rope which holds you suspended above an abyss, and which creaks every moment until it breaks. It is as if the knife of the guillotine took six weeks to fall.

Suppose I were pardoned? — Pardoned! And by whom? And why? And how? It is not possible for them to pardon me. It is for an *example*, as they say.

Only three steps remain for me, — Bicêtre, the Conciergerie, La Grève.

CHAPTER XVI.

During the few hours that I spent in the hospital I sat near a window in the sunshine, — it had come out again, — or at least in as much of it as could creep in through the grating.

I sat there, with my heavy head in my hands, which was more than they could hold, my elbows on my knees, and my feet on the rounds of my chair, for I am so weak that I lean over as though I no longer had either bones in my limbs or muscles in my flesh.

The close air of the prison was worse than ever; my ears still rang with the noise of the galleys' chains, and I was growing very tired of Bicêtre. It seemed to me that God ought to pity me, that he might at least send me a little bird to sing to me from the edge of the opposite roof.

I do not know whether it was God or the Devil who answered my wish, but almost at that very moment I heard a voice beneath my window; not that of a bird, but, what was better, the pure, fresh, clear voice of a young girl of fifteen. I raised my head with a start, and listened greedily to the song she sung. The air was slow and languishing, a kind of sad and lamentable cooing. The words were something like these: —

'It was in the Rue du Mail
I was caught, oh, sorry tale!
Wretched I!
By three gendarmes, cruel men,
Who came rushing at me when
I passed by."

I cannot tell you how bitter was my disappointment. The voice sang on: —

"They came rushing at me, so!
Put great handcuffs on me, oh!
Such a load.
Then arrived the police-spy,
And a robber-friend came by
On the road,

A friend both quick and rife [nimble].
And I cried: 'Go tell my wife
I am caught!'
Then my wife came with a run,
'Husband, tell me, what hast done?'
(Thus she fought.)

Thus my wife in rage began,
And I said: 'I've killed a man
Oh, my dear!
His gold watch and money too,
And his rings so bright and new,
I have here!

'Yes, his rings so new and bright!'
My poor wife set out that night
For Versailles;
A petition she did bring
For my pardon; begged the king,
With a cry!

Sought the king to plead my cause.
And had I escaped the laws,
Wretched I,
I would deck my wife, I say,
In rich silks, and ribbons gay
I would buy.

Slippers, too, Id have her wear;
But the king in wrath did swear:
'By my crown!
I will make him dance a dance
O'er a floorless, broad expanse,
Dangling down!'"

I could hear no more, nor did I wish to. The half-veiled meaning of the horrible complaint; the struggle of the brigand

with the sentinel; the robber he meets and sends to his wife with the horrible message: "I have killed a man, and have been arrested," "*I have made an oak-tree sweat, and I am caught;*" the woman running to Versailles with a petition, and his *Majesty* growing indignant and threatening the accused to make him dance *the dance where there is no floor*, — all this sung to the sweetest tune in the sweetest voice human ear ever heard! I was amazed, petrified, completely broken down. It was so dreadful that all these terrible words should come from such fresh and rosy lips. It was like drivel from a slug on a rose.

I cannot describe my feelings; I was both ashamed and sorry. The *patois* of the prison and the galleys, such strange and bloody language, such hideous slang, sung by a young girl, in a voice that was a graceful combination of a child's and a woman's! All these deformed, shapeless words sung with such delicacy and rhythm.

Ah, what an infamous place a prison is! There is a poison about it which spoils everything. Everything is tarnished by it, even the song of a young girl of fifteen. You find a bird there; it has mud on its wing: you gather a pretty flower, you smell it; its odor is offensive.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh, if I could only escape, how I would run!

But no, one should not run. That would rouse suspicion. One should walk slowly, and sing, with head erect. If possible, one should wear an old blue smock-frock with red figures on it. That would be a good disguise. Every gardener in the neighborhood wears one.

I know a thicket near Arcueil, by the side of a swamp, where I used to come with the fellows every Thursday when I was at college, to fish for frogs. I would hide there until evening.

When night came I would go on again. I would go to Vincennes. No; the river would prevent me. I would go to Arpajon. It might be better to go by Saint-Germain, to Havre, and embark for England.

Well, in any case, I would finally reach Longjumeau. A gendarme passes me. He asks for my passport. I am lost!

Ah, poor dreamer! first break the three feet of thick wall which holds you a prisoner! Death! Death!

And to think that once when I was a child I came here to Bicêtre, to see the great dungeons and the madmen!

CHAPTER XVIII.

While I have been writing all this, my lamp has grown dim, daylight has come, the chapel clock has struck six —

What does that mean? My keeper has just been into my cell; he took off his cap, bowed to me, apologized for disturbing me, and asked me in as mild a tone as his rough voice could command, what I wanted for breakfast.

I began to shiver. Will it happen to-day?

CHAPTER XIX.

Yes, it is going to happen to-day!

The director of the prison came himself to see me. He asked me what he could do for me. He hoped I had nothing to complain of, either in regard to him or his subordinates; asked with interest about my health, and how I had passed the night. As he was leaving, he called me *sir!*

It is to happen to-day!

CHAPTER XX.

This jailer thinks I have no complaint to make of him or his subordinates, and he is right. It would be wrong indeed of me to complain; they have done their duty in guarding me carefully; and they have been polite at all times. Should I not be content?

This good jailer, with his gentle smile and kind words, his eye which flatters and at the same time spies, his great thick hands, — he is the prison incarnate; he is Bicêtre personified. Everything is a prison about me. I find it in every form; under the human form as under that of lock and key. This wall is the prison in stone; this door is the prison in wood; the keepers are prisons in flesh and bone. The prison is a horrible being, complete, indivisible, — half-house, half-man. I am its prey: it broods over me; it holds me in its close embrace; it encloses me within its granite walls, clasps me beneath its iron bolts, and watches me with its jailer's eyes.

Ah, wretch that I am! what shall I become? What do they want to do with me?

CHAPTER XXI.

I AM calm now. All is well over. I have recovered from the horrible anxiety which the director's visit gave me. For, I will confess, I did have hope. Now, thank God, I have none.

This is what has just taken place: —

Just as the clock struck half-past six — no, a quarter-past — my prison door opened. An old man with white hair, in a long brown cloak, entered. His cloak was thrown back, and I saw a cassock and a band. He was a priest.

But he was not the prison chaplain, and this did not augur well.

He sat down opposite me, and smiled kindly; then he bowed his head, and raised his eyes to heaven, — that is, to the ceiling of my cell. I understood what he meant.

"My son," said he, "are you prepared?"

I answered in a weak voice, —

"I am not prepared, but I am ready."

A mist rose before my eyes, an icy perspiration came out all over me; I felt my temples swelling and my ears ringing.

While I swayed in my chair as though half asleep, the good man talked to me.

At least, I think he did; I seem to remember that his lips moved; and, while his hands clasped each other, his eyes lighted up.

The door opened a second time. The grating of the key roused me from my stupor and him from his discourse. A gentleman in black, accompanied by the director of the prison, appeared, and bowed low to me. The man wore on his face that sad official look which belongs to undertakers. He held a roll of paper in his hand.

"Monsieur," he said with a courteous smile, "I am the bailiff from the royal court-house of Paris. I have the honor to bring you a message from the attorney-general."

The first shock over, all my presence of mind returned.

"Is it the attorney-general," I asked, "who demands my head? I feel highly honored that he has written to me. I trust that my death will give him much pleasure; for it would be hard to think that he asked for it so anxiously, and that after all it was indifferent to him."

I said all this, and continued in a firm voice, —

"Read it, sir."

He began to read a long document, chanting at the end of every line, and hesitating between each word. It was the refusal of my appeal.

"The sentence will be carried out to-day, on the Place de Grève," he added, when he had finished, and without raising his eyes from the paper. "We leave at exactly half-past seven for the Conciergerie. My dear sir, will you be good enough to be ready?"

I had heard nothing for a moment or two. The director was talking with the priest, who was gazing at the paper. I glanced toward the half-open door. Ah, miserable fool! four soldiers stood in the corridor!

The bailiff repeated his question, this time looking at me.

"Whenever you please," I replied. "You may make yourself easy." He bowed, saying, —

"I shall have the honor of returning for you in half an hour."

Then they left me alone.

O God! some means of escape! some means; I know not what! I must escape! I must! And at once! By the door, the window, through the timbers of the roof! Even though I leave my skin on the beams!

Oh, fury! demons! malediction! It would take months to pierce through the walls with the best of instruments, and I have not even a nail or an hour!

CHAPTER XXII.

IN THE CONCIERGERIE.

HERE I am *transferred*, as the report says.

But the journey is worth describing.

The clock was striking half-past seven as the bailiff again presented himself at the door of my cell. "Monsieur," said he, "I am ready for you." Alas! he and others as well!

I rose and took one step forward; it seemed as though I could not take another, my head was so heavy and my limbs so weak. But after a moment I recovered myself, and walked with firm steps. Before leaving the cell, I cast a last glance at it. I loved it, that cell! Then I left it empty and open; a strange thing in a cell.

But it will not remain so very long. This evening they expect some one, the jailers said, a convict whom the Court of Assizes is sentencing even now.

At a turn of the corridor the priest joined us. He had just breakfasted.

As we left the jail, the director took me affectionately by the hand, and added four veterans to my escort.

Before the door of the hospital, a dying old man cried out to me, "*Au revoir!*"

We reached the courtyard, where I breathed again; the air did me good.

We did not walk far, however.

A carriage drawn by post-horses was waiting in the first court; it was the same that had brought me, a kind of long cabriolet, divided into two sections by a longitudinal grating of iron wire, so thick that it looked as if it might have been knitted. Each section had a door, one in front, the other at

the rear of the cabriolet. The whole thing was so dirty, so black and dusty, that a hearse for paupers would be a king's chariot in comparison.

Before burying myself in this two-wheeled tomb, I glanced about the yard with a desperate look, before which the very walls might have crumbled. The court, a small square, planted with trees, was even fuller of spectators than it had been for the galleys. Already the crowd had begun!

As on the day of the departure of the galleys, a fine, icy rain was falling, which is coming down even now as I write, and which will probably continue all day, even after I am gone.

The roads were rough, the court-yard full of mud and water. I was glad to see the crowd standing in all this mud.

The bailiff and a gendarme stepped into the front compartment, the priest, a second gendarme, and myself into the other. There were four mounted gendarmes around the carriage. So, without the driver, there were eight men to one.

As I stepped in, an old woman with gray eyes exclaimed, "I like this even better than the galleys."

I understood what she meant. It was a sight that was more easily grasped and sooner over. It was just as pleasant, and more convenient. There is nothing to distract one. There is only one man, and on him alone is centred as much misery as on all the galleys together. Only it is less scattered; it is a concentrated liquor, and much sweeter.

The carriage began to move. It made a dull sound as it passed under the arch of the great entrance; then it turned into the avenue, and the dark walls of Bicêtre were lost behind us. As in a stupor I felt myself carried on, like a man in a lethargy, who knows that he is being buried, yet who can neither move nor cry. In a vague way I heard the jingling of the bells on the horses' necks, keeping time, and playing a sort of hiccough, the iron wheels moving over the pavement or grating against the carriage as it crossed the ruts in the road, the even galop of the gendarmes

on either side of the carriage, and the lashing of the driver's whip. It all seemed like a whirlwind that was sweeping me away.

Through a hole in the wire grating opposite me, my eyes fell mechanically on the inscription engraved in large letters above the great door of Bicêtre: "*Hospital for the Aged.*"

"Ah," I said to myself, "there are people who indeed grow old there."

And as happens between sleep and waking, I turned the idea over and over again in my mind, which was already dull with grief. All at once the carriage passed from the avenue into the highroad, and the point of view of my sky-light was changed. The towers of Notre Dame arose blue and dim in the mist of Paris. Immediately the view-point of my mind changed also. I was a machine like the carriage. To the thought of Bicêtre now succeeded the thought of the towers of Notre Dame. "Those who are on the tower where the flag is have a fine view," I said to myself, smiling stupidly.

I think that it was at that moment that the priest began to speak. I patiently let him talk. The noise of the wheels, the gallop of the horses, the lash of the driver's whip, still were in my ears. The priest's words were only an extra noise.

So I listened in silence to the monotonous fall of words which lulled my mind like the murmur of a fountain, and which passed before me, always varied, yet always the same, like the gnarled elms along the highroad, when suddenly I was roused by the sharp, jerky voice of the bailiff.

"Well, Monsieur Abbé," said he, in a tone that sounded almost gay, "what news have you?"

He turned to the priest.

The latter continued talking to me, and made no reply. The noise of the carriage-wheels drowned the bailiff's words.

"Oh!" he continued, raising his voice above the noise of the carriage; "this infernal wagon!"

Infernal indeed!

He went on, —

"No doubt it is the joggling of the carriage that prevents his hearing me. What was I saying? Tell me what was I saying, Monsieur Abbé? Oh, yes! Do you know the news of Paris to-day?"

I swayed, as though he were speaking of me.

"No," replied the priest, who finally heard; "I had no time to read the papers this morning. I shall see them this evening. When I am busy like this all day, I tell my porter to keep my papers, and I read them on my return."

"Bah!" resumed the bailiff, "you must know this. The news of Paris! the news of this morning!"

I spoke.

"I think I know it."

The bailiff looked at me.

"You! Indeed! In that case, what do you think of it?"

"You are curious!" I replied.

"And why, sir?" asked the bailiff. "Every one has his political opinion, and I esteem you too highly to think that you are without one. As for me, I am entirely of the opinion that the National Guard should be restored. I was sergeant of my company, and it was very pleasant."

I interrupted him.

"I did not know that this was the news."

"And what is it, then? You said you knew."

"I was referring to something else, in which Paris is interested to-day."

The stupid fellow did not understand, and his curiosity was roused.

"Something else? Where in the devil could you learn any news? What is it, my dear sir? Do you know what it is, Monsieur Abbé? Are you better informed than I? Tell me, I beg you. What is this news? You know I love news. I tell it to the President, and it amuses him."

And a thousand idle stories they are, too, that he tells. He turned first to the priest and then to me; but I only shrugged my shoulders.

"Well," said he, "of what are you thinking?"

"I think," I answered, "that I will not think any more this evening,"

"Ah, yes, of course!" he replied. "But come! you are too sad! Monsieur Castaing talked."

Then, after a pause, —

"I escorted Monsieur Papavoine; he wore his otter cap, and smoked his cigar. As to the young fellows of La Rochelle, they talked only among themselves. But they talked."

Another pause; then he continued, —

"Fools! Enthusiasts! Apparently they scorned the whole world. But for what you have done, I find you very pensive, young man."

"'Young man!'" I cried; "I am older than you; and every fifteen minutes makes me a year older, besides."

He turned, looked at me a moment in stupid wonder, and then began to laugh loudly.

"Come! you are jesting, you older than I! I might well be your grandfather!"

"I am not jesting," I answered sadly.

He opened his tobacco pouch.

"Here, my dear sir, do not be angry; take a pinch of tobacco, and do not bear me ill-will."

"Do not fear; I shall not have long to bear it."

Just then his tobacco pouch, which he offered me, came in contact with the wire grating between us. A jolt of the carriage knocked it out of his hand, and it fell violently to the floor, at the gendarme's feet.

"Cursed grating!" cried the bailiff.

He turned to me.

"Am I not unfortunate? All my tobacco is lost!"

"I am losing more than you," I replied, smiling.

He tried to gather up the tobacco, muttering between his teeth, —

"More than I! That is easy to say! But no tobacco all the way to Paris! It's dreadful!"

The priest addressed a few consoling words to him; and, perhaps I was dreaming, but it seemed as though it were the conclusion of the exhortation, the beginning of which I had heard. By degrees the conversation was carried on only between the priest and the bailiff; I let them talk on their side, and gave myself up to my own thoughts on mine.

When we reached the city limits I was still preoccupied, no doubt, but Paris seemed noisier than ever.

The carriage stopped a moment at the toll-gate. The city custom-house officers came out to examine it. Had I been a sheep or an ox going to slaughter, they would have had a purse of silver thrown them; but a human head does not pay for right of way, and we passed on.

We crossed the Boulevard, and the cabriolet went at a rapid rate through the old winding streets of the Faubourg Saint-Marceau and La Cité, which twine and intertwine one about the other like the thousand paths of an ant-hill. On the pavement of these narrow streets the noise of the wheels became so loud that all other sounds were lost. When I glanced through the little square hole, it seemed that the crowd of passers-by had stopped to watch the carriage, and that groups of children were running after it. It seemed, too, as though now and then I saw on the cross-walks a ragged man or woman, sometimes both together, with a bundle of printed papers in their hands, that the people were quarrelling over, opening their mouths as though in the act of giving a loud cry.

The Palace clock struck half-past eight as we reached the court-yard of the Conciergerie. The sight of the wide staircase, the black chapel, the sinister-looking entrances, froze me; and when the carriage came to a stand-still, I thought the beating of my heart had stopped too.

But I gathered myself together. The gate was opened like lightning; I jumped from the cell-on-wheels, and was hurried at rapid strides beneath the arch, between two lines of soldiers. Already a great crowd had collected about me.

CHAPTER XXIII.

As I walked along the public corridors of the Palais du Justice I felt at my ease and almost free; but all my resolution left me when they opened the low doors, the secret staircases, and the close and dark inner corridors, where no one enters except the prisoners or those who convict them.

The bailiff never left my side. The priest went away, to return in two hours; he had business to look after.

They took me to the director's office, where the bailiff left me. It was an exchange. The director begged him to wait an instant, saying that he had some *game* to give him which he might take at once to Bicêtre on the return of the carriage. Probably it is the man who was condemned to-day, and who, this evening, will lie on the straw which I had not the time to use.

"Very well," said the bailiff to the director. "I will wait a moment; we can make out both reports at the same time. That is a good plan."

Meanwhile I had been put into a small office opening out of that of the director. There I was left alone under lock and key.

I do not know of what I was thinking, nor how long I was there, when all at once a rough and loud burst of laughter roused me from my stupor.

I raised my eyes tremblingly. I was no longer alone in the cell. A man was there with me, — a man about fifty-five, of medium height, wrinkled, round-shouldered, grayish, and thick-set, with an evil look in his gray eyes, and a bitter smile on his lips; dirty, ragged, and half-naked, he was altogether a most repulsive sight.

The door must have opened, thrust him in, and closed

again without my having noticed it. If only death might come in that way!

For a few seconds we looked at each other, that man and I, — he, with a laugh like a rattle; I, half-amazed, half-frightened.

"Who are you?" I asked at length.

"You have the right to ask," he replied; "I am a *friauche.*"

"A '*friauche!*' What is that?"

The question seemed to augment his gayety.

"That," he answered, in the midst of a fresh burst of laughter, "that means that the *taule* will play with my *Sorbonne* in six weeks, as he is about to play with your body in six hours. Ah, ah! it seems that now you understand."

I was white; my hair stood on end. He was the other convict, whom they were expecting at Bicêtre, — my successor.

He continued, —

"What can you expect? I will tell you my story. I am the son of a good *peigre;* it is a pity that Charlot (the hangman) took the trouble once to tie his cravat. It was when the gallows reigned, by the grace of God. At the age of six, I had neither father nor mother. In the summer I rolled in the dust of the gutters, to see if some one would throw me a penny from the door of the stages; in the winter I went about in the mud with bare feet, blowing on my red fingers to keep them warm. My skin could be seen through my trousers. At the age of nine I had begun to use my hands; now and then I emptied a pocket or stole a cloak. At the age of ten I was a pickpocket. Then I made some acquaintances. At seventeen I was a thief. I forced open a shop by means of a false key. I was arrested. Being of age, I was sent to work in the galleys. It was hard there; sleeping on a plank, drinking nothing but water, eating black bread, dragging after me a stupid ball, which was of no use to any one, and suffering from burns from a baton, and from the hot sun too. Besides all this,

we were shaved, and I had such beautiful brown hair. Well, no matter! I served my time. Fifteen years pass, after a while! I was thirty-two. One fine morning they gave me a ticket and sixty-six francs, which I had saved during the fifteen years in the galleys by working sixteen hours a day, thirty days a month, and twelve months a year. That was all right. I wanted to be an honest man with my sixty-six francs, and I had more beautiful ideas under my rags than there are under an abbé's cassock. But how the devils acted with that passport! It was yellow, and they had written on it '*Freed galley.*' I had to show it everywhere, and present it every week before the mayor of the village where they compelled me to live. It was a fine recommendation! A galley! They were afraid of me; the children ran from me, and every door was shut in my face. No one would give me work. I devoured my sixty-six francs. I had to live. I showed that my arms were strong enough to work, but they shut their doors. I offered to do a day's labor for fifteen sous, for ten, for five. No. So what was there left for me to do? One day I was hungry. I knocked in a baker's case, seized some bread, and the baker seized me. I did not eat the bread; and I had the galleys for life, with three letters branded on my shoulders. You may see them if you wish. They call this act of justice *the second offence.* I was back again to the galleys. They took me to Toulon; this time with the life convicts. I had to escape. I had three walls to cut through, two chains to break, and one nail with which to do it; but I succeeded. They shot after me; for, like the cardinals at Rome, we were dressed in scarlet, and they shoot when we leave. Their powder went to the sparrows. This time I had no yellow passport, but no money either. I met some fellows who had served their turn or broken their chains. Their chief suggested that I join them; they committed murders on the great highways. I accepted his offer, and set about killing in order to live. Now it was a stage-coach, now a post-chaise, now a cattle-dealer on horseback. We took the money, let the beast

or the wagon go, and buried the man under a tree, being careful that his feet did not stick out; then we danced on the spot, so that the earth would not look as though it had been freshly turned. I grew old in such pursuits, living in the brush-wood, sleeping beneath the shining stars, and wandering from wood to wood, but at least I was free and my own master. Every one has some object in life; it may as well be one as another. But one starry night, the gendarmes seized us by our collars. My comrades escaped; but I, the eldest, was caught in the claws of these cats with their cockade hats. I was brought here. Already I had mounted every step of the ladder except one. To have stolen a handkerchief or murdered a man was all the same to me once; there remained but one more *recidive* to apply to me. I had only to reach the hangman. My trial was short. I was beginning to grow old, and to be of no further use. My father was hanged, and I am now about to enter the monastery of Mont-à-Regret (the guillotine). There, comrade!"

I was speechless at his story. He began to laugh louder than ever, and tried to take my hand, but I recoiled in horror.

"Friend," said he, "you do not look brave. Do not be a coward in the face of death. It will be hard for a moment, when you reach the Place de Grève, but it is so soon over with! I should like to be there to show you how to fall. A thousand gods! I would rather not make another appeal, if they would cut me down with you. The same priest would serve us both; it is all the same to me to take your leavings. You see that I am a good fellow. Hey? Will you accept my friendship?"

Again he started to approach me.

"Monsieur," I replied, pushing him away, "I thank you."

Fresh burst of laughter at my reply.

"Ah! ah! monsieur, you are a marquis! You are a marquis!"

I interrupted him.

"My friend, I have need to collect myself; leave me."

The serious tone in which I uttered the words sobered him at once. He nodded his gray and almost bald head; then imprinting his nails into his shaggy breast, which was bare under his open shirt, he murmured between his teeth, —

"Ah, I understand, the priest!"

After a few moments' silence, —

"Yes," he said, almost timidly, "you are a marquis; that is good. But you have a fine cloak which will not be of much use to you! The *taule* will take it. Give it to me; I will sell it, and buy tobacco."

I took off my cloak, and handed it to him. He began to clap his hands in childish glee. Then, seeing that I was in my shirt-sleeves and shivering, he exclaimed, —

"You are cold, sir; take this. It is raining, and you will get wet; besides, one must look decent in the wagon."

He removed his thick gray linen coat, and put my arms through it. I let him do so.

Then I leaned against the wall; but I cannot tell what effect the man had on me. He began to examine the cloak which I had given him, crying out every second with joy, —

"The pockets are perfectly new! The collar is not worn! I can get at least fifteen francs for it. What luck! Tobacco enough for my six weeks!"

The door opened. They had come for both of us, — to escort me to the room where the convicts awaited their turn; to take him to Bicêtre. He took his place, with a laugh, in the midst of the guard who was to lead him away, and said to the gendarmes, —

"Ah, do not be deceived! Monsieur and I have changed our coats, that is all; but do not mistake me for him. But the devil! that would not trouble me, now that I have something with which to get some tobacco!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

The old criminal stole my cloak, for I did not give it to him; and he left me this ragged thing, this dirty coat. What do I look like?

I did not let him take my cloak from any feeling of indifference or charity. No; but because he was stronger than I. Had I refused, he would have struck me with his great fists.

Charity indeed! I was full of evil thoughts. I should have liked to strangle him with my hands, the old robber! and crush him beneath my feet!

I feel that my heart is full of rage and bitterness. I think that the sack of hatred has burst. Death makes one wicked.

CHAPTER XXV.

THEY took me to a cell where there were only the four walls, many bars across the window, and many locks at the door, all of which goes without saying.

I asked for a table, a chair, and the necessary writing-materials, all of which they brought me.

Then I asked for a bed. The jailer looked at me in surprise, as though to ask, *"Of what use?"*

But they put up a cot in the corner. At the same time a gendarme was stationed in what they called *"my room."* Were they afraid I would strangle myself with the mattress?

CHAPTER XXVI.

It is ten o'clock.

O my poor little girl! only six hours, and I shall be dead! I shall be an unclean something which is dragged over the cold table of the amphitheatres, — a head that they will cast on one side, a body that they will dissect on the other; then what is left on one side they will put into a coffin, and take to Clamart.

This is what they are going to do with your father, these men who do not hate me, but who pity me, and who could save me. They want to kill me. Do you understand all this, Marie? Kill me in cold blood, systematically, for the good of the thing. Ah, my God!

Poor little maid! Your father who loved you so, your father who kissed your sweet little white neck, who ran his hand through your curls as through silk, who took your sweet, round face in his hands, who jumped you on his knees, and at night joined your little hands to pray to God!

Who is there now who will do all this for you? Who is there to love you? All the children of your age will have fathers except you. How can you, my child, give up, on New Year's Day, the gifts, the pretty playthings, the candies, and kisses? How can you, poor little orphan, give up drinking and eating?

Oh, if the jury had only seen my little Marie, they would have understood that they must not kill the father of a baby three years old!

And when she grows up, if she lives, what will become of her? Her father will be one of the souvenirs of the people of Paris. She will blush for me and my name; she will be scorned, repulsed, despised, on account of me — me, who

loves her with my whole heart. O my beloved little Marie! Is it really true that you will feel shame and horror for me?

Miserable wretch! what a crime I have committed, and what a crime I am about to make society commit!

Oh, is it really true that I am going to die before the close of the day? Is it really true that it is I? Yes, this dull sound of cries which I hear outside, this crowd of joyous people who are already running to the wharves, the gendarmes who are getting themselves ready in their barracks, the priest in his black gown, the other man with the red hands, — it is all for me! It is I who am going to die! I, this very I who am here, who am living, moving, and breathing, who is seated at this table, which is like another table, and might be elsewhere. It is I, whom I touch and feel, and whose clothing makes these folds!

CHAPTER XXVII.

If only I knew how it was done, and in what way they died there; but it is horrible, because I do not know.

The name of the thing is frightful, and I do not understand how I ever could have written or pronounced it.

The combination of those ten letters, their shape, their appearance, may well arouse a frightful idea. The physician of evil who invented the thing had a predestined name.

The picture which this hideous word brings before me is vague, indistinct, and sinister. Every syllable is like a part of the machine. In my mind I build and overthrow the monstrous scaffold unceasingly.

I dare not ask a question; but it is frightful not to know what it is, or how it works. It seems that there is a see-saw, and that you lie down on your stomach. Ah! my hair will turn white before my head falls!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

But once I saw it.

I was driving over the Place de Grève one day, about eleven o'clock in the morning. All at once the carriage stopped.

There was a crowd on the Place. I put my head out of the window. Crowds filled La Grève and the wharf; and men, women, and children were standing on the parapet. Above the heads I saw a kind of platform of red wood, that three men were erecting.

A convict was to be executed that very day, and they were building the machine.

I turned my head aside before I saw any more. Beside my carriage a woman said to a child, —

"See! look! the knife works badly; they are going to oil the groove with candle-grease."

That is probably what they are doing to-day. Eleven o'clock has just struck. No doubt they are oiling the groove.

Ah, this time, wretch that I am, I shall not turn aside my head!

CHAPTER XXIX.

Oh, my pardon! my pardon! Perhaps they will pardon me. The king bears me no ill-will. Let them find my lawyer! quick, my lawyer! I want the galleys. Five years in the galleys, and let it all end, or twenty years — or life with the crimson brand. But pardon for my life!

A criminal can still walk; he can come and go; he can see the sun.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE priest has returned.

He has white hair, a quiet manner, and a kind and gentle face; he is a good and charitable man. This morning I saw him empty his purse into the hands of the prisoners. How does it happen that his voice has nothing which may move or be moved? How does it happen that he has not told me anything which appealed to my heart or my mind?

This morning my thoughts were wandering. I scarcely heard what he said to me. But his words seemed useless, and I was indifferent; they fell like the cold rain on that icy window.

But when he came in just now, the sight of him did me good. Among all these men, he alone is still a man for me, I say to myself. And he gave me a great thirst for good and consoling words.

We sat down, he on the chair, I on the bed. He said to me, "My son." This word opened my heart. He continued: —

"My son, do you believe in God?"

"Yes, my father," I answered.

"Do you believe in the holy Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church?"

"Yes," I replied.

"My son," he continued, "you seem by your manner to doubt."

Then he began to speak. He talked a long time; he used many words. When he thought he had finished, he rose and looked at me for the first time since the beginning of his discourse.

"Well?" he asked.

I declare that I listened to him first with eagerness, then with attention, then with devotion.

I rose too.

"Monsieur," I replied, "leave me alone, I beg."

"When shall I return?" he asked.

"I will let you know."

Then he went out without a word, but shaking his head as though saying, —

"An unbeliever!"

But no, low as I may have fallen, I am not that; God is my witness that I believe in him. But what did the old man say to me? Nothing which roused any feeling, any tenderness, any tears; nothing from *the soul;* nothing which came straight from his heart into mine; nothing which came from him to me. On the contrary, something vague, indistinct, applicable to everything and everybody; emphatic where there was need for depth, dull where it should have been simple, — a kind of sentimental sermon and theological elegy. Here and there a Latin quotation in Latin. Saint Augustine, Saint Gregory — what do I care about them? And then he seemed to be reciting a lesson which he had recited twenty times already, or of repeating a theme which was almost worn out from having been so long in his mind. There was no expression in his eyes, no feeling in his voice, no meaning in his gestures.

Yet how could it be otherwise? This priest is the official chaplain of the prison. His mission is to console and exhort, and he lives on this. The galleys, the victims, are the resource of his eloquence. He confesses and attends them, because he has his position to fill. He has grown old in leading men to death. For a long time he has been accustomed to that before which others tremble. His locks, well powdered with white, no longer stand on end; the galleys and the scaffold are everyday affairs for him. He is *blasé.* Probably he has his copybook, — such a page for the galleys; such a page for the convict condemned to die. He is told

"BUT THIS GOOD OLD MAN,—WHAT IS HE TO ME, OR I TO HIM?"

the evening before, that there will be some one for him to console at such an hour the next day. He asks who it is, galley or convict, and re-reads the page; then he makes his visit. In this way it happens that those who are bound for Toulon and those who are to go to La Grève are common ground for him, and he for them.

Oh, if instead of all this they would send me some young vicar, or an old curate in charge of his first parish; if they would go to him in the corner of his fireplace, where he is reading his book and expecting nothing, and say to him: —

"There is a man who is about to die, and you are the one who must console him. You must be there when they bind his hands, when they cut off his hair; you must enter the wagon with him, and with your crucifix hide the hangman from him; you must be jostled with him over the pavement to La Grève; you must go with him through the horrible crowd, drunk with blood; you must embrace him at the foot of the scaffold; you must stay there until his head is severed from his body."

And when they brought him to me, trembling, and shivering from head to foot, I would throw myself into his arms, and at his feet; and he would cry, and we would cry together, and he would grow eloquent, and I would be consoled; my heart would unburden itself against his, and he would take my soul, and I would take his God.

But this good old man, — what is he to me, or I to him? An unhappy individual, a shadow, like many another he has already seen — a unit to add to the number of executions.

Perhaps I am wrong thus to repel him; it is he who is good, and I who am bad. Alas! it is not my fault. It is the atmosphere of the prison which spoils and kills everything.

They have just brought me some food; they thought that I must be in need of it. The tray is neat and dainty; and there is a chicken, I think, besides other things. Well! I tried to eat; but at the first bite everything fell from my mouth, it tasted so bitter and nauseating!

CHAPTER XXXI.

A MAN just came in, with his hat on his head; but he scarcely noticed me. He opened a foot-rule, and began to measure the height of the stones in the wall, speaking in a very loud voice, and saying, "*That is right;*" or, "*That is not right.*"

I asked the gendarme who he was. It seems that he is an under-architect employed in the prison.

On his part, his curiosity was aroused concerning me. He exchanged a few words in a low tone with the jailers who accompanied him, looked at me an instant, shook his head carelessly, and returned to his measuring, speaking in a loud voice.

His duty finished, he approached me, saying in his loud tones, —

"My good friend, in six months this prison will be greatly improved."

And his gestures seemed to add, —

"You will not enjoy it; what a pity!"

He almost smiled. I thought he was going to tease me, as one might tease a young bride on her wedding-night.

My gendarme, an old soldier with chevrons, replied for me, —

"Monsieur, we do not speak so loud in a death-chamber."

The architect went away.

And I was left there, like one of the stones he had measured.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Then a funny thing happened.

They had taken away my kind old gendarme, whom I had not even shaken by the hand, ungrateful egoist that I am. Another took his place, a man with a low brow, eyes like a cow's, and a stupid face.

I paid no attention to him, but sat before the table with my back to the door. I was trying to cool my brow with my hand, for I was troubled in mind.

A light touch on my shoulder made me turn. It was the new gendarme, who was alone with me.

This is somewhat the way in which he addressed me.

"Criminal, have you a kind heart?"

"No," I replied.

The brusqueness of my answer seemed to disconcert him. But he continued hesitatingly, —

"One is not bad for the pleasure of being so."

"And why not?" I asked. "If you have nothing else to say to me, leave me. What are you aiming at?"

"I beg pardon, my criminal," he replied; "just two words. These: If you could make a poor man happy, without its costing you anything, would you not do so?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"Do you come from Charenton? You choose a strange vase from which to draw happiness. *I* make any one happy!"

He lowered his voice, and assumed an air of mystery, which was not in keeping with his stupid face.

"Yes, criminal, happy and lucky. You can make me all this. Listen. I am a poor gendarme. My duties are heavy, my pay is small; my horse is my own, and is the ruin of me.

But to offset this I take shares in the lottery. One must have some business. Until now I have needed nothing in order to win except lucky numbers. I look everywhere for sure ones; but I always fall to one side. I place 76; it draws 77. In vain have I kept them; they do not come. A little patience, please; I am almost through. But here is a lucky chance for me. It seems — pardon me, criminal — that you are to die to-day. It is a well-known fact that those who die in this way see the lottery in advance. Promise me to come to-morrow evening, — what difference will it make to you?— and give me three numbers, three good ones. Hey? I am not afraid of ghosts, you may be sure. This is my address: Caserne Popincourt, staircase A, number 26, at the end of the corridor. You will recognize me, won't you? Come even this evening, if it is more convenient for you."

I would have scorned answering him — the imbecile! — if a mad hope had not crossed my mind. In such a desperate position one occasionally imagines that a chain can be broken by a thread.

"Listen," I said, acting the comedian as much as is possible when one is about to die, "I will make you richer than the king, so that you can win millions — on one condition."

He opened his stupid eyes.

"What condition? What? Anything to please you, my criminal."

"Instead of three numbers, I promise you four. Change clothes with me."

"If that is all!" he cried, unhooking the top hooks of his uniform.

I rose from my chair. I watched his every movement with a beating heart. Already I saw the doors opening before the gendarme's uniform, and the Place, the street, and the Palais of Justice behind me!

But he turned with an undecided air.

"Ah, is this in order that you may escape?"

Then I knew that all was lost, yet I tried a last resort, which was foolish and useless.

"Yes," I replied, "but your fortune is made."

He interrupted.

"Well, no! Not so fast! You must be dead for my numbers to be lucky ones."

I sat down mute, in greater despair than ever, after the hope I had had.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

I CLOSED my eyes, and raised my hands, trying to forget the present in the past. As I dreamed, thoughts of my childhood and early manhood came back to me one by one, sweet, calm, and smiling, like islands of flowers, across the gulf of black and confused thoughts which were seething in my brain.

I was a child again, a merry, laughing schoolboy, playing, running, and shouting with my brothers in the great green paths of the wild garden where I passed my early years, in an old yard belonging to a convent, over which towered the dark dome of the Val-de-Grâce.

And then four years later, a child still, but dreamy and passionate. There was a young girl in the lonely garden.

Pepa, a little Spanish maid of fourteen, with great eyes, thick hair, a golden-brown skin, and red lips and rosy cheeks.

Our mothers told us to go and run together; but we walked.

They told us to play, but we talked, children of the same age, but of different sex.

There was only one year left for us to run and quarrel together. I argued with Pepita over the most beautiful apple on the tree; I struck her for a bird's nest. She cried: I said, "That served you right!" and we went to our mothers with our complaints; and they told us aloud that we were in the wrong, but whispered aside to us that we were right.

Later she is leaning on my arm, and I am proud and happy. We walk slowly, and speak in low tones. She drops her handkerchief; I pick it up for her. Our trembling hands touch. She tells me about the little birds, about the star which is visible beyond, about the crimson sun setting behind the trees, or about her schoolmates, her dress, and her rib-

bons. We make innocent remarks, and both of us blush. The little maid has grown into a young woman.

That evening —it was summer — we were under the chestnut-trees, at the end of the garden. After one of those long pauses with which our conversation abounded, she dropped my arm, exclaiming, "Let us run!"

I can see her now; she was in black, in mourning for her grandmother. This childish idea had entered her head; Pepa was Pepita again, as she cried, "Let us run!"

She started ahead of me, her slender waist like a wasp's. and her flying skirts showing her little feet above the ankles, I sped after her. Now and then the wind raised her black tippet, and I saw her soft brown neck.

I was beside myself. At last I caught her near an old ruined well. I seized her by the waist, by right of conquest, and made her sit down on a grassy knoll; she did not resist. She was out of breath, and smiling. I was serious, and I watched her black eyes behind her dark lashes.

"Sit here," she said to me. "It is still daylight; let us read something. Have you a book?"

I had with me the second volume of the *Voyages of Spallanzani.* I opened it at random, and I drew nearer to her; she leaned her shoulder against mine, and we began to read to ourselves. Before turning a page she always had to wait for me. My mind acted less quickly than hers.

"Have you finished?" she would ask when I had scarcely begun.

Our heads touched each other, and our hair; we felt each other's breath little by little, and finally our lips met.

When we turned back to our reading the sky was full of stars.

"O Mamma, Mamma," cried she, as we reached home, "if you only knew how we have run!"

I was silent.

"You say nothing," said my mother. "You look sad." But my heart was a paradise.

That was an evening I shall remember all my life.

All my life!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Some hour has just struck, but I know not which one; I can scarcely hear the striking of the clock. I feel as though the noise of an organ were in my ears; but these are my last thoughts which make such a hum.

At this supreme moment, when I am lost in these remembrances, I recall my crime with horror; and I want to repent still more. I felt greater remorse before I was condemned; since then it seems as though there was no time for anything but thoughts of death. But I should like to repent.

When I consider for a moment what my life has been, when I think of the axe which is about to end it all, I shiver as though it were a new thing to me. My beautiful childhood! My happy youth! A golden cloth, the end of which is bloody. Between then and now, runs a river of blood; another's blood and mine.

If some day my story should be known, no one, after reading of so many years of innocent happiness, will wish to think of this dreadful year, which began by a crime, and ended in an execution; it will appear odd and out of place.

And yet, oh, wretched laws, and wretched men, I was not wicked!

Oh! to have to die in a few hours, and to think that a year ago, on a day like this, I was free and innocent, taking my autumn stroll, wandering under the trees, and walking among the leaves!

CHAPTER XXXV.

Even at this very moment there are about me, in the homes around the Palais and La Grève, everywhere throughout Paris, men coming and going, talking and laughing; men reading the papers, and thinking of their business; merchants making bargains; young girls planning their ball-gowns for this evening; mothers playing with their children!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

I REMEMBER one day when I was a child I went to see the great bell of Notre-Dame.

I was already dizzy from having climbed the dark, winding staircase, and crossed the frail gallery which connects the two towers whence I saw Paris at my feet, when I entered the cage of stone and wood where the bell hangs, with its tongue which weighs an hundredweight.

I advanced tremblingly across the poorly joined planks, looking over at the clock which is so famous among the children and the people of Paris, and realizing, not without some fright, that the slate box about it, with its sloping sides, was on a level with my feet. Every now and then I saw, as the crow flies, so to speak, the Place of Parvis, Notre-Dame, and the people who seemed like ants.

All at once the great bell began to strike; a deep vibration filled the air, making the heavy tower sway. The beams of the floor trembled. The sound almost threw me over. I swayed, and barely escaped falling down the sloping sides of the slate box. In terror I lay down on the beams, grasping them tight with both hands, without speaking, without breathing, with that dreadful noise in my ears, and under my eyes that precipice, that Place far below me, where so many peaceful, enviable people were passing.

Well, it seems as if I were still in that bell-tower. Everything is indistinct and blurred. Something like the noise of a bell shakes the cavities of my brain; and around me I see the calm, tranquil life I have left, which other men are still living; but I see it only from afar, and across the depths of an abyss.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Hôtel de Ville is an evil-looking building. It is on a footing with La Grève, with its narrow, pointed roof, its strange belfry, its great white dial, its rows of small columns, its thousand windows, its worn staircases, its two arches on the right and left; sombre and sad it stands, its face wasted away with years, and so dirty that even in the sunlight it is black.

On execution days it emits gendarmes from all its doors, and it watches the condemned man with all its windows.

In the evening, its dial, which marked the fatal hour, still shines out upon its dark façade.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It is a quarter-past one.

This is how I feel.

I have a violent pain in my head, my back is cold, my forehead burns. Every time I rise or lean over, it seems as though there were a liquid in my brain which makes it knock against the sides of my head.

I tremble convulsively, and now and then the pen falls from my hand as though by a galvanic action.

My eyes smart as though I were in the midst of smoke.

My elbows ache.

But only two hours and forty-five minutes are left before I shall be well again.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

They say that it is nothing, that one does not suffer, that it is an easy, simple death.

But what is this agony for six weeks, and this rattle for twelve whole hours? What is the anguish of this irreparable day which is passing so slowly and yet so quickly? What is this ladder of torture leading to the scaffold? Is all this "nothing"?

Apparently this is not suffering.

Is it not the same sensation when the blood wastes away drop by drop as when the mind exhausts itself thought by thought?

Then, are they sure that we do not suffer? Who has told them so? Has it ever happened that a bloody head has raised up on the edge of the scaffold, and cried out to the people, "That did not hurt!"

Has any one who was killed in this way returned to thank them, and say, "That is a good invention; do not give it up. The machine is fine."

Did Robespierre? Did Louis XVI.?

No! But it is nothing! they say. In less than a minute, in less than a second, it is over. But have they ever put themselves, even in thought, in the place of the one who is there, when the heavy axe falls, tearing the flesh, breaking the nerves, cutting the vertebræ — ah! only half a second! The pain is over — oh, horrors!

CHAPTER XL.

It is strange that I am constantly thinking of the king. In vain have I tried not to, in vain have I shaken my head; there is a voice in my ear which says constantly, —

"In this same city, at this very hour, and not far from here, there is, in another palace, a man who also has guards at every door; a man like you, individual among the people, with this difference, — that he is as high as you are low. His whole life, minute by minute, is but glory, grandeur, delight, intoxication. Everything about him is love, respect, veneration. The loudest voices become low when he is addressed, and the proudest brows humble. Beneath his eyes all is silk and gold. At this very moment he is holding a council of ministers where every one is of his opinion; or he is thinking of to-morrow's hunt, of this evening's ball, sure that the *fête* will come, and leaving to others to plan his pleasures. Well! this man is flesh and blood like you! And in order, at this very instant, for the horrible scaffold to crumble, and all be restored to you, — life, liberty, fortune, family, he need only write with this pen the seven letters of his name, at the bottom of a slip of paper; or it needs but his coach to meet your wagon. And he is good, and would ask for nothing better, perhaps; and yet none of this happens!"

CHAPTER XLI.

Very well, then! Let us be brave with death; let us take hold of this horrible idea with our two hands, and look at it full in the face. Let us ask it what it is; let us know what it demands of us; let us turn it over on every side, and spell out the enigma; let us look at the tomb in advance.

It seems to me that as soon as my eyes shall have closed, I shall see a great illumination, and abysses of light where my spirit shall roll forever. It seems to me that the sky will be lighted by itself, that the stars will be dark spots there, and that, instead of being as they are now to our living eyes, spangles of gold on black velvet, they will seem black points on a gold cloth.

Or, poor wretch that I am, it will perhaps be a hideous and deep whirlpool, the sides of which are lined with shadows, and into which I shall fall forever, seeing other forms moving about in the darkness.

Or, waking after the blow, I shall perhaps find myself on a flat, damp surface, crawling through the darkness, and turning over and over like a rolling head. It seems to me that there will be a great wind which will drive me on, and that I shall be hurled here and there by other rolling heads. At intervals there will be seas and streams of a dry and unknown liquid; everything will be black. When my eyes in their rotation shall turn upwards, they will see only a sky of blackness, the thickness of which will weigh down upon them, and far away at the end will rise great arches of smoke, blacker than the shadows. They will also see, flying in the night, small crimson sparks, which, on coming near, will become birds of fire. And it will be like this through all eternity.

It may be also that at certain times the dead of La Grève

will gather together in the black nights of winter on the Place which belongs to them. It will be a pale and bloody crowd, and I shall not be wanting. There will be no moon, and they will speak in low tones. The Hôtel de Ville will be there, with its worm-eaten façade, its fallen roof, and its dial which has been pitiless alike to all. There will be on the Place a guillotine from hell, and the Devil will execute a hangman; this will be at four o'clock in the morning. Then it will be our turn to gather around in crowds.

It is probable that it will be like this. But if these dead return, under what form will they come? What part of their incomplete and mutilated body will they keep? Which will they choose? Will the head or the body be the ghost?

Alas! what does death do with our soul? What nature does it give it? What does it take, and what does it leave with it? Where does it put it? Will it sometimes lend it eyes of flesh with which to look down upon the earth and weep?

Ah! for a priest! A priest who knows all this! I want a priest, and a crucifix to kiss!

My God! it is always the same!

CHAPTER XLII.

I BEGGED them to let me sleep, and I threw myself on the bed.

I had a clot of blood in my head, which made me sleep. It is my last sleep of this kind.

I had a dream.

I dreamed that it was night. It seemed that I was in my office with two or three of my friends, whom I do not remember.

My wife was in the adjoining bedroom, asleep with her child.

We were talking in a low voice, and what we said seemed to frighten us.

Suddenly I heard a noise somewhere in the other rooms of the house. A faint, strange, indistinct noise.

My friends heard it too. We listened; it sounded like a lock opening stealthily, like the noise coming from the sawing of a bolt.

There was something in the air which froze us. We were afraid. We thought perhaps robbers had entered my house at this late hour of the night.

We decided to go and see. I rose and took the candle. My friends followed, one after the other.

We crossed the adjoining bedroom. My wife was sleeping with her child.

We reached the drawing-room. There was nothing there. The portraits hung motionless in their gold frames against the crimson wall. It seemed to me that the door from the drawing-room into the dining-room was not in its usual place.

We entered the dining-room, and walked around it. I went first. The door from the stairway was tightly closed, as well

as were the windows. Near the stove I saw that the linen-closet was open, and that the door of this closet was drawn out, as though to hide the wall behind it.

This surprised me. We thought that some one was behind the door.

I raised my hand to close it, but could not. Startled, I pulled harder, when suddenly it yielded, and we saw a little old woman, her hands hanging down and her eyes closed, standing motionless, as though caught in the corner of the wall.

There was something hideous about it all, and my hair stands on end when I think of it.

"What are you doing there?" I asked the old woman.

No answer.

"Who are you?" I asked again.

She neither spoke nor moved, but stood with closed eyes.

My friends said, —

"Probably she is in league with those who have entered with evil intentions; they escaped when they heard us coming. She could not, and hid here."

I questioned her again; but she remained speechless, motionless, sightless.

One of us gave her a push. She fell forward.

She fell like a block of wood, like a dead thing.

We pushed her with our feet, then two of us raised her, and stood her up against the wall again. Still she gave no sign of life. We shouted in her ear, but she was as dumb as though she were deaf.

We were losing patience, and there was anger in our terror. One of the men said to me, —

"Put the candle under her chin." I did so. She half-opened one eye, — an empty socket, dull, frightful-looking, which could not see.

I removed the lighted wick, saying, —

"Ah! at last! Now answer, you old sorcerer! Who are you?"

The eye closed, unresponsive like herself.

"Well, this is too much!" cried the others. "The candle again! The candle! We'll make her speak!"

Again I placed the light under the old woman's chin.

She opened both eyes slowly, looked first at one, then at another of us, and suddenly leaning forward, she blew out the candle with an icy breath. At the same time I felt three sharp teeth clutch my hand in the darkness.

I awoke, trembling, covered with a cold perspiration.

The kind priest was sitting at the foot of my bed, reading prayers.

"Have I slept long?" I asked.

"My son," he said, "you have slept one hour. They have brought your child here. She is waiting for you in the next room. I did not wish them to waken you."

"Oh!" I cried. "My daughter! Tell them to bring her to me, my little girl!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

She is fresh and rosy, and has big eyes; she is beautiful!

They had put on a pretty dress, which was very becoming to her.

I took her, I raised her in my arms; I seated her on my knee; I kissed her hair.

Why had her mother not come with her? "Her mother is ill, and her grandmother too." That is well.

She looked at me in a surprised sort of way. She let herself be petted and fondled, and covered with kisses; but every now and then she threw an anxious look toward her nurse, who was crying in the corner.

At length I spoke.

"Marie!" I cried, "my little Marie!"

I caught her violently to my heart, choking with sobs. She gave a little cry.

"Oh, you hurt me, sir!"

"Sir!" The poor child had not seen me for a year. She had forgotten me, — my face, my words, my voice. Alas! who, indeed, would recognize me with this beard, these clothes, and this pallor? What! already forgotten by the only one whom I wanted to remember me! What! no longer a father, even now! To be condemned never again to hear the word in the language of children, which is so gentle that it cannot belong to that of men, — "*Papa!*"

To hear those lips speak it once more, just once more, this is all I would have asked for the forty years of life that they are taking from me.

"Listen, Marie," I said, taking her two little hands in mine, "do you not know me any more?"

She looked at me with her sweet eyes, and answered, —

"No!"

"Look well," I said again. "What! do you not know who I am?"

"Yes," she said; "you are a gentleman."

Alas! to love only one being in all the world, to love her with all one's love, and to have her before you, seeing you and looking at you, speaking to you, and answering you, and not knowing you! To want consolation only from her, the only one who does not know that you need it, and because you are about to die!

"Marie," I asked, "have you a papa?"

"Yes, sir," the child answered.

"Well, where is he?"

She raised her great eyes in astonishment.

"Ah! don't you know? He is dead."

Then she began to cry; I almost let her fall from my knee.

"Dead!" I exclaimed; "Marie, do you know what it is to be dead?"

"Yes, sir," she replied. "He is in the earth and in heaven too."

She went on of her own accord, —

"I pray to the good God for him night and morning, on mamma's knee."

I kissed her forehead.

"Marie, say your prayer for me."

"I cannot say it now, sir. A prayer is not made in the daytime. Come this evening to my house, and I will say it for you."

This was enough. I interrupted her.

"Marie, I am your papa."

"Oh!" she exclaimed.

I added, "Do you want me for your papa?"

The child turned away.

"No; my papa was much more beautiful."

I covered her with tears and kisses. She tried to disengage herself from my arms, crying, —

"Your beard hurts me."

I sat her again on my knees, devouring her with my eyes, and then I questioned her.

"Marie, do you know how to read?"

"Yes," she replied; "I can read very well. Mamma makes me read my letters."

"Well, let us hear you read a little," I said, pointing to a paper, which she was crumpling in one of her baby hands.

She nodded her pretty head.

"Well, I can read only fables."

"Never mind; try. Come, read."

She unfolded the paper, and began to spell out with her finger, —

"*A, R, ar, R, Ê, T, rêt, arrêt*" —

I snatched it from her hands. It was my death-sentence that she was reading to me. Her nurse had bought the paper for a sou. It cost me more than that.

Words cannot express what I felt. My violence frightened her. She was almost in tears. All at once she said to me, —

"Give me my paper; it is to play with." I handed her back to her nurse.

"Take her away," I cried.

And I fell back in my chair, sad, lonely, despairing. They may come now; I care for nothing more; the last cord of my heart is broken. I am ready for whatever they want to do with me.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The priest is good, and the jailer also. I think that they dropped a tear when I said that they might take away my child.

They have done so. Now I must harden myself, and think with firmness upon the hangman, the wagon, the gendarmes, the crowd on the bridge, on the wharf, at the windows, and that which is waiting expressly for me on that gloomy Place de Grève, which might well be paved with the heads it has seen fall.

I believe that I still have an hour in which to grow accustomed to all this.

CHAPTER XLV.

All the populace will laugh, and will clap their hands, and shout. And among all these men who are free and unknown to the jailers, who run joyfully to an execution, in this crowd of heads which will cover the Place, there will be more than one which sooner or later will follow mine into the crimson basket. More than one who comes there for me will some day come for himself.

For these fatal beings there is, on a certain spot of La Grève, a fatal place, a centre of attraction, a trap. They turn around until they finally reach it.

CHAPTER XLVI.

My little Marie! They carried her away to play. She watched the crowd from the cab-window, but thought no more of the *gentleman*.

Perhaps I still have time to write a few pages for her, that some day she may read them, and fifteen years from now, may, perhaps, weep at to-day.

Yes, she must know my story from me, and why the name I leave her is bloody.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MY STORY.

EDITOR'S NOTE. — The pages attached to this cannot be found. Perhaps, as those which follow would indicate, the condemned man did not have the time to write them. It was late when the thought occurred to him.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A ROOM IN THE HÔTEL DE VILLE.

THE Hôtel de Ville! So I am here. The wretched journey is over. The Place is not far away; and under the window the horrible crowd is gathering, the crowd which longs and waits and laughs.

I have hardened myself in vain, I have trembled in vain; it is always the same; my heart still fails me. When, above the heads, I saw those two great crimson arms, with the black triangle at one end, standing between the two lanterns on the quay, my heart failed me. I asked to be allowed to make a final declaration. They brought me here, and they have gone for a public prosecutor. I am now waiting for him. It is so much time gained.

Here he is.

Three o'clock struck, and they came to tell me that it was time. I trembled, as though I had been thinking of anything else for five whole hours, for six weeks, six months. It affected me as though it were something unexpected.

They made me cross corridors and descend stairways. They brought me between two jailers to a gloomy, narrow, arched room on the ground-floor, that would be almost dark on a rainy, foggy day. A chair stood in the centre. They told me to be seated. I obeyed.

Near the door and along the walls several men were standing, besides the priest and the gendarmes, and there were three other men also.

The first, the largest and oldest, was fat, with a red face. He wore a cloak and a three-cornered hat. It was *he*, the hangman, the valet of the guillotine. The other two were his valets.

Scarcely was I seated, before the other two came up behind me like cats; then all at once I felt a cold steel run through my hair, and scissors touching my ears.

My hair was cut off, and its locks fell on my shoulders. The man with the three-cornered hat touched them gently with his rough hand.

Around me they were all talking in low tones.

Outside there was a great noise, like a mighty roaring. At first I thought it was the river; but from the laughter which burst out, I knew it was the people.

A young man near the window was writing in a copybook, and asked one of the jailers what they called that which they were doing.

"The toilet of the condemned man," the other replied.

I knew that it would all be described in to-morrow's paper.

Then one of the valets removed my jacket, and the other took my two hands, which were hanging down, and tied them behind me with a rope, which they knotted around my wrists. At the same time the other took off my cravat. My cambric shirt, the only article which remained of my former life, made him hesitate a moment; then he began to cut away the collar.

At this dread precaution, at the touch of the steel on my neck, my elbows shook, and I gave a stifled groan. The hand of the executioner trembled.

"Monsieur," said he, "pardon me! Did I hurt you?"

These hangmen are very gentle.

The shouts of the people outside grew louder.

The fat man with the pimpled face handed me a handkerchief to smell of which was saturated with vinegar.

"Thanks, no," I said, in as strong a voice as I could command; "I do not need it; I am very well."

Then one of the men knelt down, and bound my feet by means of a fine, narrow rope, which allowed me to take only short steps. The rope was attached to that which bound my hands.

The fat man threw my jacket over my back, and tied the sleeves under my chin. All that was to be done there was finished.

The priest approached with his crucifix.

"Come, my son," said he.

The valets took hold of my arms. I rose and walked; but my steps were weak and trembling, as though each leg had two knees.

The outside door was now flung open. The furious shouting, the cold air, and the white light fell on me as I stood in the darkness. At the farther end of the dull prison I saw all at once, through the rain, the thousand howling heads of the populace, crowding pellmell upon the wide steps of the Palais; on the right, on a level with the threshold, was a line of horses belonging to the gendarmes, of which only the front feet and the breasts could be seen from the lower door; in front, a company of soldiers was drawn up in line of battle; on the left, I saw the rear of a wagon, against which a steep ladder was leaning. It was a hideous picture, well-framed in the door of a prison.

It was for that awful moment that I had been gathering all my strength. I took three steps, and stood on the threshold of the prison.

"There he is! There he is!" cried the people. "He is coming out at last!"

And those nearest to me began to clap their hands. If they loved the king very much it would be less of a holiday.

It was an ordinary wagon, with a worn-out horse; and the driver wore a blue smock-frock, with red figures on it like those of the gardeners in the suburbs of Bicêtre.

The fat man with the three-cornered hat was the first to mount.

"Good-morning, Monsieur Sanson!" cried the children on the railings.

A valet followed him.

"Hurrah, Mardi!" cried the children again.

Both sat down on the front bench.

It was my turn next. I stepped up with a firm tread.

"He walks well!" said a woman by the side of the gendarmes.

This cruel praise gave me courage. The priest took a seat opposite me. They had put me on the rear seat, with my back to the horse. I shuddered at this last attention.

After all they have some feeling in them.

I looked around me. Gendarmes before, gendarmes behind; then the people, the people, the people; a sea of heads on the Place.

A picket of mounted gendarmes awaited us at the gate of the Palais.

The officer gave the order. The wagon and its procession began to move, as though pushed forward by a howl from the people.

We passed through the entrance; and as the wagon turned toward the Pont au Change, the Place burst out into a cry which echoed from the pavement to the roofs, and the bridges and the quays answered it with the noise of an earthquake.

At this point the picket joined our escort.

"Hats off! Hats off!" cried a thousand voices together, "as for the king!"

I gave a frightful laugh, and exclaimed to the priest, — "They, their hats; I, my head."

The horses walked.

The quay was sweet with the odor of plants; it was flower-market day, but the women had deserted their posies for me.

Opposite, in front of the square tower which rises at the corner of the Palais, were wine-shops, the doorways of which were filled with spectators, especially women, who were rejoicing over their fine places. The day ought to be a good one for the tavern-keepers.

They were renting tables, chairs, scaffolds, wagons. Everything was crowded with spectators. Merchants of human blood were crying out with all their might, —

"Who wants a place?"

I was filled with rage against all these people, and I longed to shout out, —

"Who wants mine?"

The wagon moved on. At every step the crowd surged up after it, and it was with fright that I saw more crowds gathering in the distance at other points of my journey.

As we crossed the Pont au Change, I chanced to look back on my right. My eyes fell on the other quay, above the houses, and on a solitary black tower, covered with carved images, on the top of which I saw two stone monsters sitting sidewise. I do not know why I asked the priest the name of the tower, but I did.

"St. Jacques-la-Boucherie," the hangman answered.

I cannot explain how it was; but nothing escaped me in the mist, in spite of the fine white rain which glistened upon everything like the network of a spider's web. Every detail suggested some horror to me. Words fail me to describe my feelings.

Toward the middle of the wide Pont au Change the crowd grew so dense that we could scarcely pass, and I was seized with a violent terror. I thought, final vanity! that I should faint. Then I strove to become deaf and blind and dead to everything except the priest, whose words I could scarcely hear, owing to the shouts of the people.

I took the crucifix and kissed it.

"Pity me, O my God!" I cried; and I tried to lose myself in this thought.

But every jolt of the hard wagon shook me. Then all at once I became violently cold. The rain had soaked my clothes, and dampened my shaved head.

"You are shaking with the cold, my son," said the priest.

"Yes," I replied.

Alas! alas! it was not only from the cold.

At a turn in the bridge, the women expressed pity at my youth.

When we reached the fatal quay, I was beginning to see and hear nothing. The voices, the heads at the windows, at the doors, at the shop-railings, on the arms of the lanterns; the open-eyed and cruel spectators, the people who knew me, and not one of whom I knew; the paved street lined with human faces — I was unconscious of them all; I was dazed and blind. It is a dreadful thing to have the weight of so many eyes bearing down upon one.

I swayed on my bench, paying no more attention even to the priest or the crucifix.

In the tumult about me, I no longer could distinguish the cries of pity from those of joy, the jeers from the sympathy, the voices from the noise; it was all a roar in my head like an echo striking on brass.

I mechanically spelled out the signs on the shops.

Once a strange curiosity made me turn my head to see what was in front of us. It was a last effort of my mind, but the body refused to obey. My neck was paralyzed as though already dead.

I saw on my left, beyond the river, one of the towers of Notre-Dame, which seen from that point hides the other. It was the one on which floated the flag. There were crowds of people there, and they must have had a good view.

The wagon went on and on, the shops passed by, one sign followed another, written, painted, and gilded, and the people shouted and stamped in the mud, and I let myself be carried on as are those in sleep by their dreams.

Suddenly the line of shops ended in a Place; the shouts of the populace became louder, shriller, more joyful than ever; the wagon stopped, and I almost fell forward on the floor. The priest caught me. "Courage!" he whispered. A ladder was placed at the rear of the wagon; he gave me his arm; I descended, took one step, was about to take a second, when — strength failed me. Between the two lanterns on the quay, I had seen a terrible object.

Oh, it was the real thing!

I stood still, swaying back and forth.

"I have a last declaration to make!" I cried in a weak voice, and they brought me here.

I asked to be allowed to write my last wishes. They unbound my hands; but the rope is here, waiting, and the rest is below.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A JUDGE, a commissary, a magistrate of some kind, has just come in. I implored him with clasped hands to obtain my pardon, dragging myself across the floor on my knees. He asked me with a fatal smile if that was all I had to say to him.

"My pardon! my pardon!" I cried, "or, in mercy, five minutes longer!

"Who knows? Perhaps it will come! It is so horrible to die thus at my age! One often hears of a pardon coming at the last moment. And whose pardon would it be, sir, except mine?"

The accursed hangman! He approached the judge to tell him that the execution had been arranged for a certain time, that the moment was almost at hand, that he was held responsible; and that, besides this, it was raining, and that the machine ran the risk of becoming rusty.

"Oh, in mercy! Wait one moment for my pardon, or I will defend myself; I'll bite!"

The judge and the hangman went away. I am alone. Alone with two gerdarmes.

Oh! the horrible crowd with their hyena-like yells! — Who knows if I may not escape, if I may not yet be saved. If my pardon — it is not possible for them not to pardon me!

Ah! the fiends! I seem to hear them coming up the stairs —

FOUR O'CLOCK.

1881.

The original manuscript of the "*Last Day of a Condemned Man*" bears these words on the margin of the first page: "Tuesday, October, 14, 1828," and at the foot of the last page: "Night, December 25–26, 1828, — three o'clock in the morning."

CLAUDE GUEUX.

NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following letter, the original of which is in the office of the *Revue de Paris* (*Claude Gueux* first appeared in the *Revue de Paris*), reflects too much credit upon its author not to be reproduced here. In future, it will be appended to every reprint of *Claude Gueux*.

DUNKIRK, *July* 30, 1834.

To the Editor of the Revue de Paris: —

Claude Gueux, by Victor Hugo, published in your number of the 6th inst., teaches a great lesson; help me, I beg you, to make it of use. Will you be kind enough to have printed, at my expense, as many copies as there are deputies in France, and to have one sent to each?

I have the honor to be, sir,

CHARLES CARLIER, Merchant.

CLAUDE GUEUX.

Some seven or eight years ago a poor workman, by the name of Claude Gueux, was living in Paris with his mistress and child. I will give the facts as they are, and let the reader gather the morals which they sow. The workman was capable, skilful, and intelligent; poorly educated, it is true, but richly endowed by nature, and although not knowing how to read, yet perfectly able to think.

One winter, work was scarce. There was neither food nor fuel in their lodging. The man, the woman, and the child were cold and hungry. The man stole. I do not know what or from whom. What I do know is, that the theft resulted in three days' food and fuel for the woman and child, and five years' imprisonment for the man.

He was sent to serve his term in the main prison of Clairvaux. Clairvaux was an abbey, which had been turned into a bastile, a cell turned into a prison, an altar changed to a pillory. When we speak of progress, this is what some people understand by it, and this is how they carry it out. This is what they consider the term to mean.

But to continue.

When he reached the prison, they put him into a dungeon for the night and into a workshop for the day. It is not the workshop to which I object, however.

Claude Gueux, an honest workman till now, but henceforth to be known as a thief, was dignified and serious in appearance. He had a high forehead, which, although he was still young, was somewhat wrinkled, a few gray locks in his

thick black hair, a mild, and, at the same time, a powerful glance, beneath well-shaped eyebrows, wide nostrils, a projecting chin, and scornful lips. It was a beautiful head. You shall see what society did with it.

He seldom spoke, and used few gestures; but in his bearing there was something imperious which compelled obedience. His manner was thoughtful, but this was the result of his natural seriousness rather than any acquired patience. And yet he had suffered much.

In the warehouse where Claude Gueux was set to work, there was a superintendent, a regular officer of the prisons, who was both overseer of the workshop and director of the jail; who at the same time gave orders to the workmen and threatened the prisoners; who put the tools into their hands and irons upon their feet. He was a model of his kind, a man of few words, tyrannical and obstinate, and always keeping a short rein on his authority; and yet, on the other hand, a good companion at times, a kind fellow, even jovial and ready for a jest; hard rather than firm; arguing with no one, not even with himself; a good father and kind husband, no doubt, but this is a duty and not a virtue; in a word, he was bad, but not wicked. He was one of those men who have nothing vibrating or elastic in their nature; who are composed of inert molecules, which answer to the touch of no idea, to the contact of no sentiment; whose anger is speechless, whose hatred is morose, whose feeling is unenthusiastic; who catch fire without burning, whose heating qualities are absent, who are like logs of wood. They burn at one end, but are cold at the other. The principal or diagonal line, so to speak, of this man's character was obstinacy. He was proud of this fact, and compared himself to Napoleon; but this was only an optical illusion. Many people are the dupes of such an illusion; and from a distance they look upon obstinacy as strength of will, and upon a candle as a star. So, when this man had once adjusted his so-called *will* upon some absurd idea, he went with head erect through every obstacle,

to the very end. Obstinacy without intelligence is foolishness soldered to the end of stupidity, and merely serves to make it longer. More than this. Generally, when a private or public catastrophe has fallen upon us, if we examine the rubbish on the ground, we will almost always find that it was blindly built by some obstinate and mediocre man, who had confidence in himself and who admired himself. These little obstinate fatalities often occur, and they are called acts of Providence.

Such was the superintendent of the workshops of the central prison of Clairvaux. That is what the steel was made of, with which society struck the prisoners daily in order to make sparks.

The sparks from such flint on such stones often cause incendiarism.

As we have said, as soon as Claude Gueux reached Clairvaux, he was given a number in the shop, and riveted to a duty. The superintendent made his acquaintance, saw that he was a good workman, and treated him well. One day he happened to be in a good humor, and seeing that Claude Gueux was sad, for the man was constantly thinking of the woman he called *his wife*, he told him, as a matter of gossip, and to pass away the time, as well as to console him, that the unhappy woman had gone to the bad. Claude coldly asked what had been done with the child, but no one knew.

After a few months Claude grew accustomed to the atmosphere of the prison, and appeared no longer to be thinking of anything. He showed a certain severe calmness, well suited to his character.

About this same time he had acquired a singular authority over his companions. As though by a tacit agreement, without any one's (not even himself) knowing why, all the men consulted him, listened to him, admired him, and imitated him, which is the highest flattery. It was no ordinary glory to be obeyed by all these rebellious temperaments. The power came to him without any effort on his part. It lay in

the glance of his eye. Man's eye is a window through which one sees the thoughts which come and go in his head.

Put a man of ideas among men who have none, and after a certain time, by the irresistible law of attraction, all the empty heads will gravitate, humbly and with adoration, around the bright head. There are men who are cast-iron, and men who are loving. Claude was loving.

So in less than three months he had become the soul, the law, and the order of the shop. Every hand turned on his dial. Sometimes he wondered himself if he were king or captive. He was a sort of pope, imprisoned with his cardinals.

And by a very natural reaction, which takes place everywhere, because he was beloved by the prisoners, he was hated by the jailers. It is always so. Popularity is never without disfavor. The love of the slaves is always offset by the hatred of the masters.

Claude Gueux was a hearty eater. This was a peculiarity of his temperament. His stomach was such that the food of two ordinary men was scarcely enough for him. Monsieur de Cotadilla had a similar appetite, and used to laugh about it; but what is a subject for mirth in a duke, a Spanish noble, who has five hundred thousand sheep, is a troublesome thing for a workman, and a misfortune for a prisoner.

Claude Gueux, free in his granary, worked all day, won his four pounds of bread, and ate it. Claude Gueux, in prison, worked all day, and invariably received for his trouble one pound and a half of bread and four ounces of meat. The ration is inexorable; so Claude was always hungry in Clairvaux prison.

He was hungry, but that was all. He never spoke of it. That was part of his nature.

One day Claude had finished his meagre pittance, and had returned to work, thinking so to forget his hunger. The other prisoners were eating joyfully. After a moment, a young man, pale, thin, and sickly-looking, approached him.

He held in his hand his ration, which he had not touched, and a knife. He stood near Claude, as though he wanted to speak, but did not dare. This man, with his bread and meat, annoyed Claude.

"What do you want?" at length he asked roughly.

"I want you to do me a favor," answered the young man timidly.

"What is it?" asked Claude.

"I want you to help me eat this. There is too much for me."

Tears came into Claude's proud eyes. He took the knife, divided the young man's ration in two equal parts, took one, and began to eat.

"Thank you," said the young man. "If you will, we will share in this way every day."

"What is your name?" asked Claude Gueux.

"Albin."

"Why are you here?" again asked Claude.

"Because I stole."

"So did I," said Claude.

Every day they shared their ration. Claude Gueux was thirty-six years old; but there were times when he seemed fifty, he was so severe-looking. Albin was twenty, but seemed seventeen, he looked so innocent. A close friendship sprang up between the two men, a friendship like that of father and son, rather than that of brother and brother. Albin was still almost a child; Claude was already almost an old man.

They worked in the same shop, they slept under the same key-stone, they walked in the same yard, they ate the same food. Each was the whole world to the other. Apparently they were happy.

We have already spoken of the superintendent. This man was hated by the prisoners, and was often obliged, in order to enforce obedience, to have recourse to Claude Gueux, whom they loved. More than once, when he wished to prevent a

strike or a quarrel, the unofficial authority of Claude Gueux had helped the superintendent. To quiet the prisoners, ten words from Claude were worth ten gendarmes. Claude had many times rendered such help to the superintendent. So the latter hated him cordially. He was jealous of the robber. He felt deep in his heart a secret, envious, implacable hatred against Claude, the hatred of the rightful sovereign against the acting sovereign, temporal power against spiritual.

Such hatred is the worst kind.

Claude loved Albin dearly, and gave no thought to the superintendent.

One morning, as the jailers were bringing the prisoners, two by two, from the dormitory to the workshop, one of them called to Albin, who was by the side of Claude, and told him that the superintendent wanted to see him.

"What do they want with you?" asked Claude.

"I do not know," replied Albin.

The jailer led him away.

The morning passed, but Albin did not return to the shop. When the hour for mess arrived, Claude thought he would find him in the yard. They returned to the shop, but Albin was not there. So the day passed. When evening came, and the prisoners were led back to the dormitory, Claude looked about for Albin, but could not see him. He must have been suffering greatly; for he spoke to a jailer, an unheard-of thing for Claude to do.

"Is Albin ill?" he asked.

"No," answered the jailer.

"What has happened, then, that he has not come back to-day?" asked Claude.

"Oh," said the jailer carelessly, "they have changed his workroom."

Those who gave these facts afterwards say that at this reply from the jailer, Claude's hand, which held a lighted candle, trembled slightly. But he replied calmly, —

"Who gave that order?"

"M. D.," returned the jailer.

The superintendent was called M. D.

The following day passed as did the preceding one, without Albin.

In the evening, when the work was over, the superintendent, M. D., made his usual round in the shop. As soon as Claude saw him, he removed his coarse linen cap, buttoned his gray jacket, the sad-looking livery of Clairvaux (for it is an idea in prison that a jacket respectfully buttoned makes a favorable impression on the officers), and stood with cap in hand, beside his bench, awaiting the superintendent. When the latter passed, Claude called out, —

"Monsieur?"

The superintendent stopped, and half turned.

"Monsieur," said Claude, "is it true that Albin's room has been changed?"

"Yes," replied the superintendent.

"Monsieur," continued Claude, "I need Albin in order to live. You know I have not enough food from the prison ration, and Albin shares his with me."

"That is his affair," said the superintendent.

"Monsieur, is there no way of bringing back Albin into this room?"

"That is impossible. The arrangement is made."

"By whom?"

"By me."

"Monsieur D.," continued Claude, "it is life or death with me; and it depends on you."

"I never take back a decision."

"Monsieur, have I done anything to annoy you?"

"Nothing."

"Then, why do you separate me from Albin?" asked Claude.

"Because," replied the superintendent.

After this explanation, he passed on.

Claude lowered his head without reply. Poor caged lion that he was, whose dog they had removed!

We must admit, however, that the grief at this separation in no way changed the fierce voracity of the prisoner. Nothing apparently was any different with him. He never spoke to any of his comrades of Albin. He walked alone in the yard at the recreation hour, and he was hungry. This was all.

But those who knew him well, noticed something sinister and sombre on his face, which grew deeper every day. In other respects he was gentler than ever.

Several offered to share their ration with him, but he refused them, smiling.

Every evening, since the explanation that the superintendent had given him, he did a thing which in so serious a man was foolish. When the superintendent made his usual round, and passed by Claude, the latter raised his eyes, and looking him full in the face, in a tone of suppressed agony and anger, a combination of pleading and threatening, he uttered these two words: "*And Albin?*" The superintendent pretended not to hear, or shrugged his shoulders and passed on.

The man did wrong to shrug his shoulders, for it was evident to all the spectators that Claude Gueux was quietly determined to do something. The whole prison waited anxiously for the result of the contest between stubbornness and resolution.

It is known that Claude once said to the superintendent, —

"Listen to me, sir. Give me back my comrade. You would better, I tell you. Remember that."

Again, one Sunday, as he sat in the yard, on a stone, his elbows on his knees, and his forehead in his hands, without having changed the position for some hours, the convict Faillette came up, and laughingly cried out to him, —

"Why in the devil are you sitting like this, Claude?"

And Claude slowly raised his serious face, and replied, —

"*I am judging some one.*"

Finally, one evening, the 25th of October, 1831, as the superintendent made his rounds, Claude with his foot, broke

the crystal of a watch which he had found that morning in the corridor. The superintendent asked what caused the noise.

"It is nothing," said Claude; "I did it. Monsieur, give me back my friend."

"That is impossible," returned the master.

"But you must," said Claude in a low tone, and looking the superintendent full in the face, he added, —

"Consider well. To-day is the 25th of October. I will give you until the 4th of November."

A jailer told M. D. that Claude had threatened him, and that it was a case for a strait-jacket.

"No, no strait-jackets," answered the superintendent, with a scornful smile; "we must be kind to these men!"

The following day the convict Pernot stopped Claude, who was walking alone and pensive, while the other prisoners were enjoying themselves at the farther end of the court in a square of sunshine.

"Well, Claude, what are you thinking about? You look sad."

"*I am afraid,*" replied Claude, "*that before long some misfortune will come to this kind M. D.*"

There were nine whole days from October 25 to November 4. Claude did not let one pass without seriously telling the superintendent of his feelings at being separated from Albin. The superintendent grew weary, and once sent him to the cell of correction for twenty-four hours, because his request sounded too much like a threat. But that was all that Claude received.

The 4th of November arrived. Claude awoke with a calmer face than he had had since the day when the M. D.'s *decision* had separated the friends. When he rose, he put his hand into a sort of box made of whitewood, which stood at the foot of his bed, and which contained his few clothes. He drew out a small pair of scissors. This, with an odd volume of *Emile,* was all that remained of the woman he had loved, of the mother of his child, of his once happy home.

They were two very useless articles for Claude; the scissors were of use only to a woman, and the book to one who could read. Claude could neither read nor sew.

As he crossed the old desecrated, whitewashed cloister, which was used as a winter promenade, he went up to the convict Ferrari, who was attentively studying the thick bars of a grating. Claude held the scissors up to Ferrari, saying, —

"This evening I am going to cut those bars with these scissors."

Ferrari, incredulous, began to laugh, as did Claude.

That morning Claude worked harder than ever, and faster and better. He seemed to attach a certain degree of importance in the finishing of a straw hat for which a good fellow from Troyes, Monsieur Bressier, had paid him in advance.

Just before noon he went down on some pretext or other to the furniture shop, which was on the ground-floor, under the room where he worked. Claude was loved there as everywhere, but he rarely went there.

"See! There is Claude!" the men cried, as he entered. All turned. It was a regular *fête*. Claude glanced quickly across the room. None of the jailers were present.

"Who has an axe to lend me?" he asked.

"What are you going to do with it?" they asked.

"I am going to kill the superintendent this evening," he replied.

Several axes were handed him to choose from. He took the smallest, which was very sharp, hid it in his trousers, and went away. There were twenty-seven prisoners in the room, but he had no need to bind them to secrecy. No one would tell.

They did not even mention the affair among themselves.

Every one waited to see what would happen. The situation was terrible, clear, and simple — no possible complication. Claude would not be betrayed or in any way hindered.

An hour later, he went up to a young convict of sixteen, who was yawning in the corridor, and advised him to learn to read. Just then Faillette called to Claude, and asked him

"CLAUDE JUMPED UPON HIS BENCH, AND ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD SOMETHING TO SAY."

what in the devil he had hidden in his trousers. Claude replied, —

"It is an axe with which I am going to kill M. D. this evening." Then, "Does it show much?"

"A little," replied Faillette.

The rest of the day passed in the usual way. At seven o'clock the prisoners were shut up, each division in the shop which was assigned to it; and the guards left the workshops, as was customary, to return only after the superintendent had made his rounds.

So Claude, like all the rest, was locked in his shop with his fellow-workers.

Then there occurred an extraordinary scene in that workshop, a scene which lacks neither dignity nor terror, and the only one of its kind in history.

There were in the room, according to the accounts since given by witnesses, eighty-two robbers, including Claude.

As soon as they were alone, Claude jumped upon his bench, and announced that he had something to say. Silence fell upon the room.

Claude raised his voice, and cried: —

"You all know that Albin was my friend. What they gave me here to eat was not enough for me. Even by buying bread with the little money I earn, I have not enough. Albin shared his ration with me; I loved him first on this account, and afterwards because he loved me. The superintendent, M. D., separated us. It was nothing to him, our being together; but he is a wicked man, who likes to torment us. I asked him for Albin. You have all seen that he was not willing to return him. I gave him till the 4th of November to restore him, and he put me in the cell of correction for having said that to him. During all this time I have judged him, and I have condemned him to death" [this is verbatim]. "It is the 4th of November. In two hours he will make his round. I warn you that I am going to kill him. Have you anything to say to this?"

Silence.

Claude continued speaking with an eloquence which seemed inspired, but it was natural to him. He said that he realized that he was going to commit a crime, but that he did not think himself in the wrong. He called to witness the consciences of the eighty-one robbers who heard him: —

That he was driven to extremes;

That the necessity of doing justice to one's self was a blind alley, in which one sometimes was caught;

That he could not take the superintendent's life without taking his own, but that he thought it was right to give his life for a just cause;

That he had duly reflected on the situation and on that alone for two months;

That he felt he was not led into his act by any feeling of resentment, but if such were thought to be the case, he begged that they would say so;

That he frankly told his reasons to the just men who were listening to him;

That he was going to kill M. D., but if any one had any objection to offer, he was ready to hear it.

One voice alone answered him, saying, that before killing the superintendent, Claude should try a last time to speak to him, and try and convince him.

"That is fair," said Claude, "and I will do so."

Eight o'clock struck from the great clock. The superintendent would come at nine.

When this strange court of appeals had in a way approved the sentence which he pronounced, Claude's calmness returned. He put on the table all his linen and clothing, the prisoner's scanty wardrobe, and calling one by one upon the comrades he loved next best after Albin, he gave something to each. He kept only the little pair of scissors.

Then he embraced them all. Some of them cried, but he smiled at this.

There were times during that last hour when he talked

with such calmness and even gayety that several of his comrades hoped in their hearts, as they have since said, that he perhaps would give up his idea. Once he even amused himself by extinguishing one of the few candles in the shop with his nostrils, for he had some bad habits of bringing up, which detracted from his natural dignity oftener than they should. At times nothing could prevent this ancient street gamin from smelling of the Paris gutters.

He noticed a young prisoner, who was pale and trembling, watching him attentively, no doubt to see what was going to happen.

"Come, courage, young man!" said Claude gently, "it will take only an instant."

When all his belongings had been divided, and all his "good-byes" said, he stopped some anxious talkers here and there who were whispering in the distant corners of the shop, and told them to return to work. They obeyed in silence.

The shop in which all this occurred was oblong, a narrow parallelogram with windows on the two longest sides, and two doors at the opposite ends. The workmen were on each side near the windows, the benches at right angles to the wall, and the space between them making a sort of long aisle from one door to the other, across the entire room. Along this aisle the superintendent must walk to make his round of inspection; he would enter at the south door, and go out by the north, after having looked at the workmen on the right and left. Usually he walked fast and without stopping.

Claude took his place at his bench and applied himself to work, as Jacques Clement once did to prayer.

Every one waited. The moment was drawing near. All at once they heard a clock striking. Claude said, —

"That is the quarter-hour."

Then he rose, crossed the room slowly, and leaned his elbow on the first bench on the left near the door. His face was perfectly calm and kind.

Nine o'clock struck. The door opened, and the superintendent entered.

They were as still in the shop as though they were statues.

The superintendent, as usual, was alone.

He came in with his customary good-natured, satisfied, and inexorable expression on his face; and all unmindful of Claude, who was standing at the left of the door, his right hand hidden in his trousers, he passed quickly by the first benches, shaking his head, muttering a word, and throwing a glance here and there, never noticing that the eyes about him were fixed on one dread idea.

"All at once he turned quickly, surprised to hear a step behind him.

It was Claude, who had followed him for some instants in silence.

"What are you doing here?" cried the superintendent; "why are you not in your place?" A man was not a man there, but a dog, and as such he was treated.

Claude answered respectfully, —

"I have something to say to you, monsieur."

"What about?"

"About Albin."

"Still that same subject," exclaimed the superintendent.

"Yes; always!" replied Claude.

"So!" continued the superintendent, resuming his walk. "The twenty-four hours in the cell of correction were not enough for you?"

Claude continued, still following him, —

"Monsieur, give me back my friend."

"It is impossible."

"Monsieur," said Claude, in a voice that would have moved the devil himself, "I implore you to give me back Albin; you shall see how well I will work. It makes no difference to you, for you are free; it is all the same to you, you do not know what a friend is; but I have only my four prison walls. You can come and go as you please; I have only Albin. Give him back to me. You know very well that Albin kept me alive. It will cost you only the trouble of

saying 'yes.' What difference would it make to you if there were in the same room a man named Claude Gueux and another called Albin? For it means nothing more than that. Monsieur, my kind Monsieur D., I implore you earnestly, in the name of Heaven!"

Perhaps Claude never before had said as much at any one time to a jailer; and after this effort he waited, exhausted. The superintendent replied with an impatient gesture: —

"It is impossible. I have given the order. Talk to me no more about it. You weary me."

And he went on with hurried step. Claude followed, and both reached the exit; the eighty robbers watched and listened, breathless.

Claude gently touched the superintendent's arm.

"At least, let me know why I am condemned to die. Tell me, why have you separated us?"

"I have already told you," said the superintendent, "that it is because."

And turning away, he raised his hand to the door-knob.

At the superintendent's reply, Claude had stepped back. The eighty robbers saw him draw the axe from his trousers, raise it, and before the superintendent had time to utter a word, three blows from the instrument (a frightful thing to describe), and all three on the same spot, laid open his skull. As he fell backwards, a fourth blow demolished his face; then, as rage does not stop short, Claude Gueux, by a fifth blow, split open his right thigh. The superintendent was dead.

Claude threw aside the axe, exclaiming, "*Now for the other!*" That was himself. They saw him pull from his jacket the small scissors which had belonged to "his wife," and without any one's attempting to stop him, he thrust the blades into his breast. The points were short, and his heart was deep. He drove them in again and again, exclaiming more than twenty times, "D—— heart, I cannot find you!" and finally fell, fainting, and covered with blood, upon the body of the man he had killed.

Which of the two was the victim of the other?

When Claude recovered consciousness, he was in a bed, covered with linen bandages, and tenderly cared for. About his cot were kind Sisters of Charity, and more than one examining judge, who instructed him, and who kept asking him with great interest, "How do you feel?"

He had lost a great deal of blood, but the scissors with which he had had the pitiful idea of killing himself had done their work badly; none of the wounds he had given himself were dangerous. The only fatal wounds were those he had given to M. D.

The trial began. They asked him if he was the one who had killed the superintendent of the workshops of Clairvaux prison. He replied, "*Yes.*" They asked him why. He replied, "*Because.*"

Once his wounds just escaped resulting in blood-poisoning; he fell into a high fever, which proved almost fatal.

November, December, January, and February passed, and Claude was closely watched; physicians and judges clustered about him; the former cured his wounds, the latter built his scaffold.

We will abridge the story. The 16th of March, 1832, arrived, and he was entirely cured, and well enough to appear before the Court of Appeals in Troyes. Everything that the city could furnish in the way of a crowd was there.

Claude made a good appearance before the court. He had been carefully shaved, his head was bare, and he wore the sombre garb of the Clairvaux prison, the two shades of gray.

The public prosecutor had filled the room with all the bayonets in the town, "in order," he said to the audience, "to enforce discipline among all the criminals who are to appear as witnesses in the prosecution."

When the time for the cross-examination arrived, a strange thing happened. None of the witnesses of the 4th of November wanted to testify against Claude. The judge threatened to punish them, but in vain. Finally Claude told them to tell

what they knew, and every tongue was loosed to give the details of what they had seen.

Claude listened to all with close attention; and when any of them, through forgetfulness or affection for him, omitted facts which might convict the prisoner, Claude volunteered them.

Testimony after testimony, the series of facts which we have given, were laid before the court.

At one time the women who were present began to cry. Finally the bailiff called in the prisoner Albin. It was his turn to testify. He came in sobbing, and swaying from side to side, and the gendarmes could not keep him from rushing into Claude's arms. Claude held him close, and turning to the public prosecutor with a smile, said, "Here is a criminal who shares his bread with those who are hungry." Then he kissed Albin's hand.

When all the evidence was in, the public prosecutor rose, and said, "Gentlemen of the jury, society would be shaken to its very foundations if action by the public prosecutor did not punish guilty men like this one who" etc.

After this memorable speech, Claude's lawyer rose. The prosecution and the defence went through the usual evolutions which characterize this sort of hippodrome called a criminal trial.

Claude thought that something still remained to be said, and rose in his turn. He spoke in such a way, that at least one intelligent person who was present at the trial came away perfectly amazed.

It seemed as though the poor workman was much more of an orator than an assassin. He stood while he spoke, and uttered his words in a strong, well-modulated voice, with a clear, frank, straightforward glance, and using almost always the same gestures. He gave the facts as they were, neither more nor less, in a simple, dignified way, looking *Article 296* full in the face, and bowing his head beneath it. At times there was true eloquence in what he said; and the crowd was

touched, and repeated his words in a whisper to others in the audience.

Meanwhile, Claude paused to take breath, and glanced proudly across at the people.

At other times this man, who did not know how to read, was as gentle, as polished, and as refined in the language he used as any man of letters; then again, he was modest, careful, attentive, going step by step over the troublesome part of the argument, and even showing kindness toward the judges.

Once only did he let an expression of anger escape him. The public prosecutor had stated in the speech which we have given that Claude Gueux had murdered the superintendent of the workshops without a blow or any act of violence having been given on the part of the superintendent, consequently he had done it *without provocation.*

"What!" exclaimed Claude, "I was not provoked? Oh, yes, that is so; I see what you mean. A drunken man strikes me with his fist, I kill him. I have been provoked, you pardon me, and I am sent to the galleys. But a man who is not drunk, and who has his senses, keeps me under restraint for four years, humiliates me for four years, pricks me with a pin in unexpected places every day, every hour, every minute, for four years! I have a wife for whom I have stolen; he tortures me about this woman. I have a child for whom I have stolen; he tortures me about the child. I have not enough to eat, a friend gives me some bread; he takes away my friend and my bread. I ask him to give me back my friend, he puts me into a cell. I say '*you*' to him, the spy, and he addresses me by '*thou.*' I tell him that I suffer, he tells me that I weary him. So what would you have me do? I kill him. I am a murderer, I killed this man, but I was not provoked, and you cut off my head. Well, do so."

According to us, this was a sublime point, which all at once set a whole theory of moral provocation, that the law had forgotten, above the system of material provocation, on which leans the poorly proportioned ladder of extenuating circumstances.

The summings-up finished, the judge made an impartial and brilliant charge, which resulted in this wise: A wicked life. A monster. Claude Gueux began by living with a woman to whom he was not married, then he stole, then he murdered. All of which was true.

As he was about to direct the jury to retire, the judge asked the accused if he had anything to say as to the terms.

"Nothing very much," replied Claude, "except this. I am a robber and an assassin. I have stolen and killed. But *why* did I steal? Why did I kill? Place these questions by the side of the others, gentlemen of the jury."

After a quarter of an hour's deliberation the twelve natives of Champagne, called "gentlemen of the jury," brought in their verdict, and Claude Gueux was condemned to death.

It is true that from the beginning of the prosecution, several had noticed that the prisoner was named *Gueux*, which made a deep impression on them. (The word means "scoundrel.")

They read the sentence to Claude, who merely said, —

"That is all right. But why did this man steal? Why did this man kill? These are two questions which they leave unanswered."

They took him back to the prison, where he supped gayly, exclaiming, —

"Thirty-six years done with!"

He did not wish to make an application for a reversal of judgment. One of the Sisters who had nursed him begged him with tears in her eyes to do so; and finally, in order to please her, he consented. He resisted up to the last moment, for the legal delay of three days had expired three minutes before he signed his application on the registry.

The poor girl gave him five francs, which he took with thanks.

While his application pended, means of escape were suggested by the prisoners of Troyes, all of whom were devoted to him, but he refused them.

The prisoners threw into his cell, by means of the vent-hole, a nail, a bit of iron wire, and the handle of a pail, any one of which would have sufficed in the case of as intelligent a man as Claude to file away the bars; but he returned the handle, the wire, and the nail to the jailer.

The 8th of June, 1832, seven months and four days after the deed had been committed, the time came for atonement, *pede claudo* (as may be seen). On that day, at seven o'clock in the morning, the clerk of the court entered Claude's cell, and announced that he had only one more hour to live.

His appeal had been rejected.

"Well," said Claude coldly, "I slept well last night, never doubting but that I should sleep still better to-night."

The words of strong men should always receive from approaching death a certain dignity.

The priest arrived, then the hangman. Claude was humble with the former, gentle with the latter. He refused them neither his soul nor his body.

He kept up his spirits to the end. While they were cutting off his hair, some one in the corner of the cell spoke of the cholera, which just then threatened Troyes.

"Well, for myself," said Claude, with a smile, "I do not fear the cholera."

He listened to the priest with great attention, accusing himself greatly, and regretting that he had not been taught the Bible.

At his request they gave him back the scissors with which he had hurt himself. One blade was missing, which had broken in his breast. He begged the jailer to carry the scissors to Albin, and say that he sent them. He said also that he wanted them to add to this legacy the portion of bread which he would have had that day.

He begged those who tied his hands to put in his right hand the five-franc piece which the sister had given him, the only thing which was still left him.

At a quarter before eight he left the prison, accompanied

by the lugubrious procession which always follows a condemned man. Although pale, he walked with a firm step, with his eyes fixed on the crucifix which the priest carried.

They chose that day for the execution because it was market-day, and there would be more eyes than usual to follow him. It seemed that there are still in France half-savage villages which boast of it when a man is hanged.

He mounted the scaffold gravely, his eye still on the cross of Christ. He embraced the priest, then the hangman, thanking the one, forgiving the other. The hangman *pushed him gently away*, said a relation. When the assistant was tying him to the hideous machine, he signed to the priest to take the five-franc piece which he held in his right hand, saying,—

"For the poor."

Just then the clock in the belfry began to strike eight, and the priest could not hear what he said. Claude waited till it had struck twice, and said again, very gently, —

"*For the poor.*"

Before the eighth stroke had died away this noble and generous head had fallen.

Admirable result of public executions! That very day, the machine being still there, and not even washed, the people fell into a fight over a question of the tariff, and just escaped murdering a tax-collector. What gentle people these laws make!

We thought we ought to give a detailed history of Claude Gueux, because we think that every paragraph of the story could be used as a heading for each chapter in the book which is to solve the great problem of the people of the nineteenth century.

In this important life, there are two principal parts,—before the fall, and after the fall; and under these two phases are two questions, the question of education, and the question of punishment; and between these two questions stands society.

This man was well born, well endowed, well gifted. What did he lack? Consider a moment.

It is the great problem of proportion, the solution of which, still to be found, will give the universal equilibrium: "*Let society always do as much for the individual as nature has done.*"

Take Claude Gueux, for example. His head was well formed, and his heart, without a doubt. But fate put him into so poorly organized a society, that he ended by stealing; society put him into so poorly organized a prison, that he ended by killing.

Who is really to blame?

Is it he?

Is it ourselves?

They are hard and pertinent questions, which at present demand all consideration, which pull us all, many as we are, by the flap of our coats, and which some day will obstruct our path so completely, that it will be necessary to look them full in the face, and know what they want of us.

He who writes these lines will shortly try and describe how he understands them.

When one is in the presence of such facts, when one thinks of the way in which these questions crowd upon us, we ask ourselves what those who govern are thinking about, if it is not this.

The Chamber every year is seriously occupied. No doubt it is very important to reduce the sinecures, and open the budget; it is very important to make laws in order that I may go, disguised as a soldier, and mount guard at the door of the Count de Lobau, whom I do not know, and whom I do not want to know, or in order to make me parade on the Marigny Square, at the good pleasure of my grocer, whom they have made my officer. (It goes without saying that we do not intend to attack here the city patrol, which is a useful thing, which guards the street, the threshold, and the home; but merely the parade, the tuft, the vainglorious and military

uproar, absurdities which only make the citizen a parody of the soldier.)

It is important, deputies or ministers, to harass and to disturb the financial and political ideas of this country by discussions full of abortions; it is essential, for instance, to place on the culprit's bench, and to question in a loud voice, and without knowing what one is saying, the art of the nineteenth century, this great and cold convict who disdains to answer, and who does right in so doing; it is expedient to pass one's time, governors and legislators, in classical conferences which make the suburban schoolmasters shrug their shoulders; it is of use to state that it is the modern drama which invented incest, adultery, parricide, infanticide, and poisoning, and to prove by that that one knows neither Phèdre, nor Jocaste, nor Œdipus, nor Medea, nor Rodogune; it is indispensable for the political orators of the country to wrangle, for three whole days, regarding the budget, in favor of Corneille and Racine, against some one, no one knows who, and profit from this literary occasion to plunge all together in emulation of one another, into the throat of the great faults of French even to the guard.

All this is important; but we do think that there may be things still more important. What would the Chamber say, in the midst of the useless contests in which the ministry often seizes the opposition party by the collar, and the opposition party, the ministry, if all at once, from the benches of the Chamber or from the public gallery, it matters not which, some one were to rise and utter these startling words: —

"Keep still, whoever you are, who are speaking. Keep still! You think you are discussing the question, but you are not."

This is the question. Scarcely a year ago justice cut up a man at Pamiers with a cheap penknife; at Dijon it beheaded a woman; at Paris, near Saint-Jacques, it carried on secret executions.

This is the question. Consider this.

You may quarrel afterwards as to whether the buttons of the National Guard should be white or yellow, and whether *assurance* is a more beautiful thing than *certainty*.

Gentlemen from the Centre, gentlemen from the Extremes, the mass of people are suffering!

Whether you call it a republic or a monarchy, the people are suffering. This is a fact.

The people are hungry, the people are cold. Misery leads them to crime or to vice, according to their sex. Have pity on the people, whose sons are taken by the galleys, whose daughters by the low playhouses. You have too many criminals, you have too many prostitutes.

What do these two evils prove?

That the social body has something bad in its blood.

You are assembled in consultation about a patient's bed; look after the disease.

You do not treat the disease correctly. Study it further. The laws that you make, when you make any, are only palliatives and expedients. One-half of them are mere routine; the other half, empiricism.

The evil was a cauterization which mortified the wound; what a senseless punishment is that which seals and rivets the crime upon the criminal for life, which makes two friends of them, two inseparable companions!

The prison is an absurd blister which allows almost all the bad blood which it drew out to reabsorb, and not without having made it still worse. Capital punishment is a barbarous amputation.

But the sore, the prison, and capital punishment are three things which are closely united. You have stopped the wound; now, if you are logical, stop the rest.

The red brand, the ball, and the chopper are the three parts of a syllogism.

You have removed the red brand; the ball and the chopper have no more meaning. Farinace was cruel, but he was not absurd.

Pull down this old broken ladder of crime and punishment, and mend it. Remodel your punishment, your laws; rebuild your prisons, your judges. Let the laws follow in the footsteps of the morals.

Gentlemen, there are too many heads cut off in France every year. Since you favor economy, economize here.

Since you favor suppressions, suppress the hangmen. With the salary of your eighty hangmen, you could pay six hundred school-teachers.

Think of the mass of the people, of schools for the children, of workshops for the men.

Do you know that France is one of the countries of Europe where there are very few natives who know how to read? Yes; Switzerland can read, Belgium can read, Denmark and Greece and Ireland can read, — and France cannot! This is disgraceful.

Go into the prisons. Call out the entire crowd of prisoners. Examine each one of those condemned by human law. Study the shape of each face, touch each head. Every one of these fallen men has his brute type under him; each one is the point of intersection of such and such an animal with humanity. There is the lynx, the cat, the ape, the vulture, the hyena. And of these poor deformed heads, the first mistake lies in nature, no doubt, the second in education.

Nature made a poor drawing; education has not improved it. Turn your attention to this side, to a good education for the people. Develop, as well as you can, these poor brains, that the intelligence within them may increase.

Nations have a poorly or a highly developed intellect, according to their institutions.

Rome and Greece have a high forehead. Broaden as much as possible the facial angle of the people.

When France knows how to read, do not fail to direct the intellect which you have developed. This would cause more trouble. Ignorance is worth more than poor instruction.

Do you remember that there is a book which contains

more philosophy than the *Compère Mathieu*, which is more popular than the *Constitutionnel*, and which will last longer than the charter of 1830; it is the Bible. And just here, a word of explanation.

Whatever you may accomplish, the lot of the many, of the mass, of the *majority*, will always be relatively poor and sad and wretched. Theirs is the hard work, theirs are the burdens to push and drag and bear.

Examine the scales: every joy is on the side of the rich, every misery on that of the poor. Are not the scales uneven? Does not one side necessarily dip down, and the condition of the people with it?

And now into the scales of the poor, into the side of misery, throw the certainty of a happy future, the hope of eternal happiness, paradise. Oh magnificent counterbalance! The equilibrium is established again. The side of the poor is as rich as the side of the rich.

Jesus knew this, long before Voltaire discovered it.

Give to the people who work and suffer, give to these people to whom the world is so harsh, the belief in a better world made for them.

Then they will be calm and patient, for patience is born of hope.

Sow the villages with evangelists. Put Bibles into the cottages. And each book and every field between them will produce a moral worker.

The head of the man of the people. That is the question. This head is full of useful germs. Use it to ripen and make good all that is brightest and best in virtue.

Such an one has committed murder on the highways, but had he been better directed he would have been the best worker in the city.

This head of the man of the people — cultivate it, pull out the weeds, water it, enrich it, give it light and moral teaching, make it of use, and you will have no need to cut it off.

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